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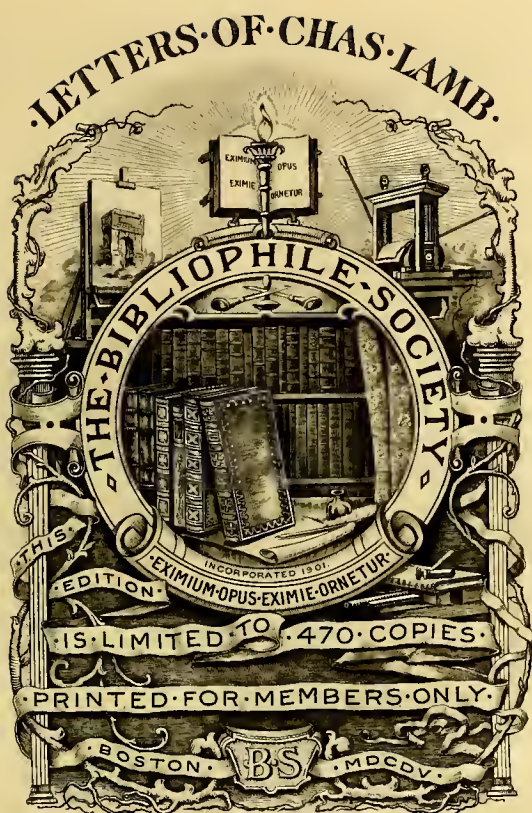


THE  
LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB

1796-1801

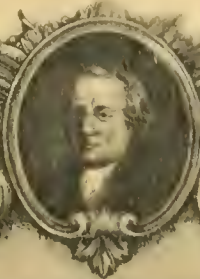
VOLUME II







Wm. L. G.



THE LETTERS OF  
**CHARLES LAMB**

IN WHICH MANY MUTILATED WORDS  
AND PASSAGES HAVE BEEN RESTORED  
TO THEIR ORIGINAL FORM : WITH

LETTERS NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED  
AND FACTS OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

**CHARLES LAMB**

*Etched by* JAMES FAGAN  
*with after painting by* Meyer

**HENRY H. HARPER**

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THE LETTERS OF  
**CHARLES LAMB**

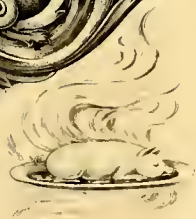
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LETTERS AND POEMS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
**HENRY H. HARPER**



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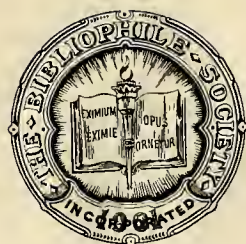


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## LETTER I

CHARLES LAMB TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Postmark May 27, 1796.]

DEAR C——: Make yourself perfectly easy about May. I paid his bill, when I sent your clothes. I was flush of money, and am so still to all the purposes of a single life; so give yourself no further concern about it. The money would be superfluous to me, if I had it.

With regard to Allen, — the woman he has married has some money, I have heard about £200 a year, enough for the maintenance of herself and children, one of whom is a girl nine years old! so Allen has dipt betimes into the cares of a family. I very seldom see him, and do not know whether he has given up the Westminster hospital.

When Southey becomes as modest as his predecessor Milton, and publishes his Epics in duodecimo, I will read 'em, — a guinea a book is somewhat exorbitant, nor have I the opportunity of borrowing the work. The extracts from it in the *Monthly Review* and the short passages in your *Watchman* seem to me much superior to anything in his partnership account with Lovell.

Your poems I shall procure forthwith. There were noble lines in what you inserted in one

of your numbers from *Religious Musings*, but I thought them elaborate. I am somewhat glad you have given up that paper: it must have been dry, unprofitable, and of "dissonant mood" to your disposition. I wish you success in all your undertakings, and am glad to hear you are employed about the Evidences of Religion. There is need of multiplying such books an hundred fold in this philosophical age to *prevent* converts to Atheism, for they seem too tough disputants to meddle with afterwards. I am sincerely sorry for Allen, as a family man particularly.

Le Grice is gone to make puns in Cornwall. He has got a tutorship to a young boy, living with his mother, a widow lady. He will of course initiate him quickly in "whatsoever things are lovely, honorable, and of good report." He has cut Miss Hunt compleatly, — the poor girl is very ill on the occasion, but he laughs at it, and justifies himself by saying, "she does not see him laugh."

Coleridge, I know not what suffering scenes you have gone through at Bristol — my life has been somewhat diversified of late. The six weeks that finished last year and began this your very humble servant spent very agreeably in a mad-house at Hoxton; I am got somewhat rational now, and don't bite any one. But mad I was, and many a vagary my imagination played with me, enough to make a volume if all told.

My Sonnets I have extended to the number

of nine since I saw you, and will some day communicate to you.

I am beginning a poem in blank verse, which if I finish I publish.

White is on the eve of publishing (he took the hint from Vortigern) Original letters of Falstaff, Shallow, &c.; a copy you shall have when it comes out. They are without exception the best imitations I ever saw.

Coleridge, it may convince you of my regards for you when I tell you my head ran on you in my madness, as much almost as on another person, who I am inclined to think was the more immediate cause of my temporary frenzy.

The sonnet I send you has small merit as poetry, but you will be curious to read it when I tell you it was written in my prison-house in one of my lucid intervals.

#### TO MY SISTER

If from my lips some angry accents fell,  
Peevish complaint, or harsh reproof unkind,  
'T was but the error of a sickly mind,  
And troubled thoughts, clouding the purer well,  
And waters clear, of Reason; and for me,  
Let this my verse the poor atonement be,  
My verse, which thou to praise wert e'er inclined  
Too highly, and with a partial eye to see  
No blemish: thou to me didst ever shew  
Fondest affection, and would'st oft-times lend  
An ear to the desponding love-sick lay,  
Weeping my sorrows with me, who repay  
But ill the mighty debt of love I owe,  
Mary, to thee, my sister and my friend.

With these lines, and with that sister's kindest remembrances to C——, I conclude.

Yours sincerely,

LAMB

Your *Conciones ad populum* are the most eloquent politics that ever came in my way.

Write, when convenient—not as a task, for there is nothing in this letter to answer.

You may inclose under cover to me at the India house what letters you please, for they come post free.

We cannot send our remembrances to Mrs. C——, not having seen her, but believe me our best wishes attend you both.

My civic and poetic comp'ts to Southey if at Bristol. — Why, he is a very leviathan of bards ; the small minnow, I.

## II. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Probably begun either on Tuesday, May 24, or Tuesday, May 31, 1796. Postmark? June 1.]

I am in such violent pain with the headache that I am fit for nothing but transcribing, scarce for that. When I get your poems, and the *Joan of Arc*, I will exercise my presumption in giving you my opinion of 'em. The mail does not come in before to-morrow (Wednesday) morning. The following sonnet was composed during a walk down into Hertfordshire early in last summer:—

The lord of light shakes off his drowsyhed.\*

Fresh from his couch up springs the lusty  
Sun,

And girds himself his mighty race to run.  
Meantime, by truant love of rambling led,  
I turn my back on thy detested walls,  
Proud City, and thy sons I leave behind,  
A selfish, sordid, money-getting kind,  
Who shut their ears when holy freedom  
calls.

I pass not thee so lightly, humble spire,  
That mindest me of many a pleasure  
gone,

Of merriest days, of love and Islington,  
Kindling anew the flames of past desire;  
And I shall muse on thee, slow journey-  
ing on,

To the green plains of pleasant Hertford-  
shire.

\*Drowsyhed

I have met with  
I think in Spenser. 'Tis an old  
thing, but it  
rhymes with led  
and rhyming  
covers a multi-  
tude of licenses.

The last line is a copy of Bowles's, "to the green hamlet in the peaceful plain." Your ears are not so very fastidious; many people would not like words so prosaic and familiar in a sonnet as Islington and Hertfordshire. The next was written within a day or two of the last, on revisiting a spot where the scene was laid of my first sonnet that "mock'd my step with many a lonely glade."

When last I roved these winding wood-walks green,

Green winding walks, and pathways shady-sweet,

Oft-times would Anna seek the silent scene,

Shrouding her beauties in the lone retreat.

No more I hear her footsteps in the shade;

Her image only in these pleasant ways

Meets me self-wand'ring where in better days

I held free converse with my fair-hair'd maid.

I pass'd the little cottage, which she loved,  
 The cottage which did once my all contain :  
 It spake of days that ne'er must come again,  
 Spake to my heart and much my heart was moved.  
 " Now fair befall thee, gentle maid," said I,  
 And from the cottage turn'd me, with a sigh.

The next retains a few lines from a sonnet of mine, which you once remarked had no " body of thought " in it. I agree with you, but have preserved a part of it, and it runs thus. I flatter myself you will like it.

A timid grace sits trembling in her eye,  
 As loth to meet the rudeness of men's  
 sight,

Yet shedding a delicious lunar light,  
 That steeps in kind oblivious extasy  
 The care-craz'd mind, like some still  
 melody ;

Speaking most plain the thoughts which  
 do possess

Her gentle sprite, peace and meek quiet-  
 ness,

And innocent loves,\* and maiden purity.  
 A look whereof might heal the cruel smart  
 Of changed friends, or fortune's wrongs  
 unkind ;

Might to sweet deeds of mercy move the  
 heart

Of him who hates his brethren of man-  
 kind.

Turned are those beams from me, who  
 fondly yet

Past joys, vain loves, and buried hopes  
 regret.

\* Cowley uses  
 this phrase with a  
 somewhat differ-  
 ent meaning: I  
 meant loves of  
 relatives, friends,  
 &c.

The next and last I value most of all. 'T was  
 composed close upon the heels of the last in that



very wood I had in mind when I wrote "Me-thinks how dainty sweet."

We were two pretty babes, the youngest she,  
The youngest and the loveliest far, I ween,  
And INNOCENCE her name. The time has been,  
We two did love each other's company;  
Time was, we two had wept to have been apart.  
But when, with shew of seeming good beguil'd,  
I left the garb and manners of a child,  
And my first love for man's society,  
Defiling with the world my virgin heart,  
My loved companion dropt a tear, and fled,  
And hid in deepest shades her awful head.  
Beloved, who can tell me where Thou art,  
In what delicious Eden to be found,  
That I may seek thee the wide world around.

Since writing it, I have found in a poem by Hamilton of Bangour, these two lines to Happiness, —

Nun sober and devout, where art thou fled  
To hide in shades thy meek contented head?

Lines eminently beautiful, but I do not remember having read 'em previously, for the credit of my tenth and eleventh lines. Parnell has two lines (which probably suggested the *above*) to Contentment, —

Whither ah! whither art thou  
fled,  
To hide thy meek contented\*  
head?

\* An odd epithet for  
contentment in a poet so  
poetical as Parnell.

Cowley's exquisite elegy on the death of his friend Harvey suggested the phrase of "we two."



Was there a tree that did not know  
The love betwixt us two? ———

So much for acknowledged plagiarisms, the confession of which I know not whether it has more of vanity or modesty in it. As to my blank verse I am so dismally slow and sterile of ideas (I speak from my heart) that I much question if it will ever come to any issue. I have hitherto only hammered out a few indepen[den]t unconnected snatches, not in a capacity to be sent. I am very ill, and will rest till I have read your poems, for which I am very thankful. I have one more favour to beg of you, that you never mention Mr. May's affair in any sort, much less *think* of repaying. Are we not flocci-nauci-what-d'ye-call-em-ists?

We have just learn'd, that my poor brother has had a sad accident: a large stone blown down by yesterday's high wind has bruised his leg in a most shocking manner; he is under the care of Cruikshanks. Coleridge, there are 10,000 objections against my paying you a visit at Bristol — it cannot be, else — but in this world 't is better not to think too much of pleasant possibles, that we may not be out of humour with present insipids. Should anything bring you to London, you will recollect No. 7 Little Queen St., Holborn.

I shall be too ill to call on Wordsworth myself, but will take care to transmit him his poem when I have read it. I saw Le Grice the day before his departure, and mentioned incidentally his "teach-

ing the young idea how to shoot" — knowing him and the probability there is of people having a propensity to pun in his company you will not wonder that we both stumbled on the same pun at once, he eagerly anticipating me,—"he would teach him to shoot!" — Poor Le Grice! if wit alone could entitle a man to respect, &c. He has written a very witty little pamphlet lately, satirical upon college declamations; when I send White's book, I will add that.

I am sorry there should be any difference between you and Southey. "Between you two there should be peace," tho' I must say I have borne him no good will since he spirited you away from among us. What is become of Moschus? You sported some of his sublimities, I see, in your *Watchman*. Very decent things. So much for tonight from your afflicted headache sorethroatey, humble servant,

C. LAMB

*Tuesday Night.* — Of your *Watchmen*, the Review of Burke was the best prose. I augur'd great things from the 1st number. There is some exquisite poetry interspersed. I have re-read the extract from the *Religious Musings*, and retract whatever invidious there was in my censure of it as elaborate. There are times when one is not in a disposition thoroughly to relish good writing. I have re-read it in a more favourable moment and hesitate not to pronounce it sublime. If there

be anything in it approach<sup>s</sup> to tumidity (which I meant not to infer in elaborate: I meant simply labor'd) it is the gigantic hyperbole by which you describe the evils of existing society. Snakes, lions, hyenas and behemoths, is carrying your resentment beyond bounds. The pictures of the simoom, of frenzy and ruin, of the whore of Babylon and the cry of the foul spirits disherited of earth and the strange beatitude which the good man shall recognise in heaven — as well as the particularizing of the children of wretchedness — (I have unconsciously included every part of it) form a variety of uniform excellence. I hunger and thirst to read the poem complete. That is a capital line in your 6th No.:

This dark freeze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering Month —

they are exactly such epithets as Burns would have stumbled on, whose poem on the plough'd-up daisy you seem to have had in mind. Your complaint that [of] your readers some thought there was too much, some too little, original matter in your Nos., reminds me of poor dead Parsons in the *Critic* — “too little incident! Give me leave to tell you, Sir, there is too much incident.” I had like to have forgot thanking you for that exquisite little morsel the 1st Sclavonian Song. The expression in the 2d “more happy to be unhappy in hell” — is it not very quaint? Accept my thanks in common with those of all who love good poetry for the Braes of Yarrow.

I congratulate you on the enemies you must have made by your splendid invective against the barterers in "human flesh and sinews."

Coleridge, you will rejoice to hear that Cowper is recovered from his lunacy, and is employ'd on his translation of the Italian, &c., poems of Milton, for an edition where Fuseli presides as designer. Coleridge, to an idler like myself to write and receive letters are both very pleasant, but I wish not to break in upon your valuable time by expecting to hear very frequently from you. Reserve that obligation for your moments of lassitude, when you have nothing else to do; for your loco-restive and all your idle propensities of course have given way to the duties of providing for a family. The mail is come in, but no parcel, yet this is Tuesday. Farewell then till tomorrow, for a niche and a nook I must leave for criticisms. By the way I hope you do not send your own only copy of *Joan of Arc*; I will in that case return it immediately.

Your parcel *is* come; you have been *lavish* of your presents. Wordsworth's poem I have hurried thro' not without delight. Poor Lovell! my heart almost accuses me for the light manner I spoke of him above, not dreaming of his death. My heart bleeds for your accumulated troubles: God send you thro' 'em with patience. I conjure you dream not that I will ever think of being repaid! the very word is galling to the ears. I have read all your *Religious Musings* with uninterrupted feel-

ings of profound admiration. You may safely rest your fame on it. The best remain<sup>s</sup> things are what I have before read, and they lose nothing by my recollection of your manner of reciting 'em, for I too bear in mind "the voice, the look" of absent friends, and can occasionally mimic their manner for the amusement of those who have seen 'em. Your impassioned manner of recitation I can recall at any time to mine own heart, and to the ears of the bystanders. I rather wish you had left the monody on C. concluding as it did abruptly. It had more of unity. — The conclusion of your *Religious Musings* I fear will entitle you to the reproof of your Beloved woman, who wisely will not suffer your fancy to run riot, but bids you walk humbly with your God. The very last words

I exercise my young novice tho'  
In ministeries of heart-stirring song,

tho' not now new to me, cannot be enough admired. To speak politely, they are a well turn'd compliment to Poetry. I hasten to read *Joan of Arc*, &c. I have read your lines at the begin<sup>s</sup> of 2d book, they are worthy of Milton, but in my mind yield to your *Religious Musings*. I shall read the whole carefully and in some future letter take the liberty to particularize my opinions of it. Of what is new to me among your poems next to the *Musings*, that beginning "My Pensive Sara" gave me most pleasure: the lines in it I just alluded to are most exquisite — they made my sister and self smile, as conveying a pleasing picture of Mrs. C.



chequing your wild wandrings, which we were so fond of hearing you indulge when among us. It has endeared us more than anything to your good Lady; and your own self-reproof that follows delighted us. 'T is a charming poem throughout. (You have well remarked that "charming, admirable, exquisite" are words expressive of feelings, more than conveying of ideas, else I might plead very well want of room in my paper as excuse for generalizing.) I want room to tell you how we are charmed with your verses in the manner of Spenser, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. I am glad you resume the *Watchman* — change the name, leave out all articles of news, and whatever things are peculiar to Newspapers, and confine yourself to Ethics, verse, criticism, or rather do not confine yourself. Let your plan be as diffuse as the *Spectator*, and I'll answer for it the work prospers. If I am vain enough to think I can be a contributor, rely on my inclinations. Coleridge, in reading your *Religious Musings* I felt a transient superiority over you: I *have* seen Priestly. I love to see his name repeated in your writings. I love and honor him almost profanely. You would be charmed with his *sermons*, if you never read 'em. — You have doubtless read his books, illustrative of the doctrine of Necessity. Prefixed to a late work of his, in answer to Paine, there is a preface, given [? giving] an account of the Man and his services to Men, written by Lindsey, his dearest friend, — well worth your reading.

*Tuesday Eve.* — Forgive my prolixity, which is yet too brief for all I could wish to say. — God give you comfort and all that are of your household. — Our loves and best good wishes to Mrs. C.

C. LAMB

### III. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Begun Wednesday, June 8. Dated on address: "Friday, 10th June," 1796.]

With *Joan of Arc* I have been delighted, amazed. I had not presumed to expect anything of such excellence from Southey. Why the poem is alone sufficient to redeem the character of the age we live in from the imputation of degenerating in poetry, were there no such beings extant as Burns and Bowles, Cowper and——: fill up the blank how you please; I say nothing. The subject is well chosen. It opens well. To become more particular, I will notice in their order a few passages that chiefly struck me on perusal. Page 26, "Fierce and terrible Benevolence!" is a phrase full of grandeur and originality. The whole context made me feel *possess'd*, even like Joan herself. Page 28, "it is most horrible with the keen sword to gore the finely fibred human frame" and what follows pleased me mightily. In the 2d Book the first forty lines, in particular, are majestic and high-sounding. Indeed the whole vision of the palace of Ambition and what

follows are supremely excellent. Your simile of the Laplander, —

by Niemi's lake  
Or Balda Zhiok, or the mossy stone  
Of Solfar Kapper

will bear comparison with any in Milton for fullness of circumstance and lofty-pacedness of versification. Southey's similes, tho' many of 'em are capital, are all inferior. In one of his books the simile of the oak in the storm occurs I think four times!

To return, the light in which you view the heathen deities is accurate and beautiful. Southey's personifications in this book are so many fine and faultless pictures. I was much pleased with your manner of accounting for the reason why monarchs take delight in war. At the 447th line you have placed prophets and enthusiasts cheek by jowl, on too intimate a footing for the dignity of the former. Necessarian-like-speaking it is correct. Page 98, "Dead is the Douglas, cold thy warrior frame, illustrious Buchan," &c., are of kindred excellence with Gray's "Cold is Cadwallo's tongue," &c. How famously the Maid baffles the Doctors, Seraphic and Irrefragable, "with all their trumpery!" 126 page, the procession, the appearances of the Maid, of the Bastard son of Orleans and of Tremouille, are full of fire and fancy, and exquisite melody of versification. The personifications from line 303 to 309 in the heat of the battle



had better been omitted, they are not very striking and only encumber. The converse which Joan and Conrade hold on the banks of the Loire is altogether beautiful. Page 313, the conjecture that in dreams "all things are that seem" is one of those conceits which the Poet delights to admit into his creed — a creed, by the way, more marvellous and mystic than ever Athanasius dream'd of. Page 315, I need only *mention* those lines ending with "She saw a serpent gnawing at her heart"!!! They are good imitative lines "he toil'd and toil'd, of toil to reap no end, but endless toil and never ending woe." 347 page, Cruelty is such as Hogarth might have painted her. Page 361, all the passage about love (where he seems to confound conjugal love with creating and persevering love) is very confused and sickens me with a load of useless personifications. Else that 9th Book is the finest in the volume, an exquisite combination of the ludicrous and the terrible,—I have never read either, even in translation, but such as I conceive to be the manner of Dante and Ariosto.

The 10th book is the most languid. On the whole, considering the celerity wherewith the poem was finish'd, I was astonish'd at the infrequency of weak lines. I had expected to find it verbose. Joan, I think, does too little in battle — Dunois, perhaps, the same — Conrade too much. The anecdotes interspersed among the battles refresh the mind very agreeably, and I am

delighted with the very many passages of simple pathos abounding throughout the poem, — passages which the author of *Crazy Kate* might have written.

Has not Master Southey spoke very slightly in his preface and disparagingly of Cowper's Homer? — what makes him reluctant to give Cowper his fame? And does not Southey use too often the expletives “did” and “does”? they have a good effect at times, but are too inconsiderable, or rather become blemishes, when they mark a style. On the whole, I expect Southey one day to rival Milton. I already deem him equal to Cowper, and superior to all living poets besides. What says Coleridge? The *Monody on Henderson* is *immensely good*; the rest of that little volume is *readable and above mediocrity*.

I proceed to a more pleasant task, — pleasant because the poems are yours, pleasant because you impose the task on me, and pleasant, let me add, because it will confer a whimsical importance on me to sit in judgment upon your rhymes. First tho', let me thank you again and again in my own and in my sister's name for your invitations. Nothing could give us more pleasure than to come, but (were there no other reasons) while my brother's leg is so bad it is out of the question. Poor fellow, he is very feverish and light-headed, but Cruikshanks has pronounced the symptoms favorable, and gives us every hope that there will be no need of amputation. God

send, not. We are necessarily confined with him the afternoon and evening till very late, so that I am stealing a few minutes to write to you.

Thank you for your frequent letters: you are the only correspondent and I might add the only friend I have in the world. I go nowhere and have no acquaintance. Slow of speech, and reserved of manners, no one seeks or cares for my society and I am left alone. Allen calls only occasionally, as tho' it were a duty rather, and seldom stays ten minutes. Then judge how thankful I am for your letters. Do not, however, burthen yourself with the correspondence. I trouble you again so soon, only in obedience to your injunctions. Complaints apart, proceed we to our task. I am called away to tea, thence must wait upon my brother, so must delay until to-morrow. Farewell. — *Wednesday*.

*Thursday*. — I will first notice what is new to me. 13th page. "The thrilling tones that concentrate the soul" is a nervous line, and the six first lines of page 14 are very pretty. The 21st effusion a perfect thing. That in the manner of Spenser is very sweet, particularly at the close. The 35th effusion is most exquisite; that line in particular, "And tranquil muse upon tranquillity." It is the very reflex pleasure that distinguishes the tranquillity of a thinking being from that of a shepherd — a modern one I would be understood to mean — a Dametas; one that keeps

other people's sheep. Certainly, Coleridge, your letter from Shurton Bars has less merit than most things in your volume; personally, it may chime in best with your own feelings, and therefore you love it best. It has, however, great merit. In your 4th Epistle that is an exquisite paragraph and fancy-full of "A stream there is which rolls in lazy flow," &c., &c. "Murmurs sweet undersong 'mid jasmine bowers" is a sweet line, and so are the three next. The concluding simile is far-fetch'd. "Tempest-honord" is a quaintish phrase.

Of the *Monody on H.*, I will here only notice these lines as superlatively excellent. That energetic one, "Shall I not praise thee, Scholar, Christian, friend," like to that beautiful climax of Shakspeare "King, Hamlet, Royal Dane, Father." "Yet memory turns from little men to thee!" "and sported careless round their fellow child." The whole, I repeat it, is immensely good.

Yours is a poetical family. I was much surpris'd and pleased to see the signature of Sara to that elegant composition, the 5th Epistle. I dare not *criticise* the *Religious Musings*, I like not to *select* any part where all is excellent. I can only admire; and thank you for it in the name of a Christian as well as a lover of good poetry. Only let me ask, is not that thought and those words in Young, "Stands in the Sun"? or is it only such as Young in one of his *better moments* might have writ?

Believe thou, O my Soul,  
Life is a vision, shadowy of truth,  
And vice and anguish and the wormy grave,  
Shapes of a dream !

I thank you for these lines, in the name of a necessarian, and for what follows in next paragraph in the name of a child of fancy. After all you can [not] nor ever will write anything, with which I shall be so delighted as what I have heard yourself repeat. You came to town, and I saw you at a time when your heart was yet bleeding with recent wounds. Like yourself, I was sore galled with disappointed hope. You had

many an holy lay,  
That, mourning, soothed the mourner on his way.

I had ears of sympathy to drink them in, and they yet vibrate pleasant on the sense. When I read in your little volume your 19th Effusion, or the 28th or 29th, or what you call the "Sigh," I think I hear *you* again. I image to myself the little smoky room at the Salutation and Cat, where we have sat together thro' the winter nights, beguiling the cares of life with poesy. When you left London, I felt a dismal void in my heart: I found myself cut off at one and the same time from two most dear to me. "How blest with ye the path could I have trod of quiet life." In your conversation you had blended so many pleasant fancies that they cheated me of my grief. But in your absence, the tide of melancholy rushed in again, and did its worst mischief by overwhelming my



reason. I have recovered. But feel a stupor that makes me indifferent to the hopes and fears of this life. I sometimes wish to introduce a religious turn of mind ; but habits are strong things, and my religious fervors are confined, alas ! to some fleeting moments of occasional solitary devotion. A correspondence, opening with you, has roused me a little from my lethargy, and made me conscious of existence. Indulge me in it. I will not be very troublesome. At some future time I will amuse you with an account as full as my memory will permit of the strange turn my phrensy took. I look back upon it at times with a gloomy kind of envy. For while it lasted I had many many hours of pure happiness. Dream not, Coleridge, of having tasted all the grandeur and wildness of fancy, till you have gone mad. All now seems to me vapid ; comparatively so. Excuse this selfish digression.

Your monody is so superlatively excellent that I can only wish it perfect, which I can't help feeling it is not quite. Indulge me in a few conjectures. What I am going to propose would make it more compress'd and I think more energetic, tho' I am sensible at the expense of many beautiful lines. Let it begin, "Is this the land of song-ennobled line," and proceed to "Otway's famish'd form." Then "Thee Chatterton," to "blaze of Seraphim." Then "clad in nature's rich array," to "orient day" ; then "but soon the scathing lightning," to "blighted land." Then "Sublime

of thought " to "his bosom glows." Then

But soon upon *his* poor unsheltered head  
Did Penury her sickly Mildew shed,  
And soon are fled the charms of vernal Grace  
And Joy's wild gleams that lightened o'er his face!

Then "Youth of tumultuous soul" to "sigh"  
as before. The rest may all stand down to "gaze  
upon the waves below." What follows now may  
come next, as detached verses, suggested by the  
monody, rather than a part of it. They are in-  
deed in themselves very sweet,—

And we at sober eve would round thee throng,  
Hanging enraptured on thy stately song—

in particular perhaps. If I am obscure you may  
understand me by counting lines. I have pro-  
posed omitting twenty-four lines. I feel that thus  
comprest it would gain energy, but think it most  
likely you will not agree with me; for who shall  
go about to bring opinions to the Bed of Pro-  
crustes, and introduce among the Sons of Men  
a monotony of identical feelings? I only pro-  
pose with diffidence. Reject, you, if you please,  
with as little remorse as you would the color of  
a coat or the pattern of a buckle where our fancies  
differ'd. The lines "Friend to the friendless,"  
&c., which you may think "rudely disbranched"  
from the *Chatterton* will patch in with the *Man of*  
*Ross*, where they were once quite at home, with  
two more which I recollect.—

And o'er the dowried virgin's snowy cheek  
Bad bridal love suffuse his blushes meek!

very beautiful. The *Pixies* is a perfect thing, and so are the lines on the spring, page 28. The *Epitaph on an Infant*, like a Jack of lanthorn, has danced about (or like Dr. Forster's scholars) out of the *Morn. Chron.* into the *Watchman*, and thence back into your Collection. It is very pretty, and you seem to think so, but maybe o'erlooked its chief merit, that of filling up a whole page. I had once deemed sonnets of unrivalled use that way, but your epitaphs, I find, are more diffuse. *Edmund* still holds its place among your best verses. "Ah! fair delights" to "roses round" in your poem called *Absence recall* (none more forcibly) to my mind the tones in which *you recited it*. I will not notice in this tedious (to you) manner verses which have been so long delightful to me, and which you already know my opinion of. Of this kind are *Bowles*, *Priestly*, and that most exquisite and most *Bowles*-like of all, the 19th *Effusion*. It would have better ended with "agony of care." The last two lines are obvious and unnecessary and you need not now make fourteen lines of it, now it is rechristen'd from a sonnet to an effusion. *Schiller* might have written the 20th *Effusion*. 'Tis worthy of him in any sense. I was glad to meet with those lines you sent me, when my sister was so ill. I had lost the copy, and I felt not a little proud at seeing my name in your verse. The complaint of *Ninthoma* (1st stanza in particular) is the best, or only good imitation, of *Ossian* I ever saw—your



restless gale excepted. "*To an Infant*" is most sweet—is not "foodful," tho', very harsh! would not "dulcet" fruit be less harsh, or some other friendly bi-syllable? In *Edmund*, "Frenzy fierce-eyed child," is not so well as frantic, tho' that is an epithet adding nothing to the meaning. Slander *couching* was better than squatting. In *The Man of Ross* it *was* a better line thus, —

"If 'neath this roof thy wine-chear'd moments pass"

than as it stands now. Time nor nothing can reconcile me to the concluding five lines of *Kosciusko*: call it anything you will but sublime. In my 12th Effusion I had rather have seen what I wrote myself, tho' they bear no comparison with your exquisite lines, —

On rose-leaf'd beds amid your faery bowers, &c.

I love my sonnets because they are the reflected images of my own feelings at different times. To instance, in the 13th, —

How reason reel'd, &c.,

are good lines but must spoil the whole with ME, who know it is only a fiction of yours and that the rude dashings did in fact NOT ROCK me to REPOSE. I grant the same objection applies not to the former sonnet, but still I love my own feelings. They are dear to memory, tho' they now and then wake a sigh or a tear. "Thinking on divers things foredone," I charge you, Col.,

spare my ewe lambs, and tho' a gentleman may borrow six lines in an epic poem (I should have no objection to borrow 500 and without acknowledging) still in a sonnet—a personal poem—I do not “ask my friend the aiding verse.” I would not wrong your feelings by proposing any improvements (did I think myself capable of suggesting 'em) in such personal poems as “Thou bleedest, my poor heart,”—'od so, I am catch'd, I have already done it, — but that simile I propose abridging would not change the feeling or introduce any alien ones. Do you understand me? In the 28th however, and in the *Sigh* and that composed at Clevedon, things that come from the heart direct, not by the medium of the fancy, I would not suggest an alteration. When my blank verse is finished, or any long fancy poems, *propino tibi alterandum, cut-up-andum, abridg-andum*, just what you will with it, — but spare my EWE LAMBS! That to Mrs. Siddons now you were welcome to improve, if it had been worth it. But I say unto you again, Col., spare my EWE LAMBS. I must confess were they mine I should omit, *in editione secundâ*, Effusions 2-3, because satiric, and below the dignity of the poet of *Religious Musings*, 5-7, half of the 8th, that written in your youth, as far as “Thousand eyes,” — tho' I part not unreluctantly with that lively line, —

Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes

and one or two more just thereabouts. But I would substitute for it that sweet poem called "Recollection" in the 5th No. of the *Watchman*, better I think than the remainder of this poem, tho' not differing materially. As the poem now stands it looks altogether confused. And do not omit those lines upon the "early blossom," in your 6th No. of the *Watchman*, and I would omit the 10th Effusion, or, what would do better, alter and improve the last four lines. In fact, I suppose if they were mine I should *not* omit 'em. But your verse is for the most part so exquisite, that I like not to see aught of meaner matter mixed with it. Forgive my petulance and often, I fear, ill founded criticisms, and forgive me that I have, by this time, made your eyes and head ache with my long letter. But I cannot forego hastily the pleasure and pride of thus conversing with you.

You did not tell me whether I was to include the *Conciones ad Populum* in my remarks on your poems. They are not unfrequently sublime, and I think you could not do better than to turn 'em into verse, — if you have nothing else to do. Allen I am sorry to say is a *confirmed* Atheist. Stodart, or Stothard, a cold-hearted, well-bred, conceited disciple of Godwin, does him no good. His wife has several daughters (one of 'em as old as himself). Surely there is something unnatural in such a marriage. How I sympathise with you on the dull duty of a reviewer, and heartily damn with you Ned Evans and the Prosodist. I shall however

wait impatiently for the articles in the *Critical Review*, next month, because they are *yours*. Young Evans (W. Evans, a branch of a family you were once so intimate with) is come into our office, and sends his love to you. Coleridge, I devoutly wish that Fortune, who has made sport with you so long, may play one freak more, throw you into London, or some spot near it, and there snug-ify you for life. 'T is a selfish but natural wish for me, cast as I am "on life's wide plain, friend-less." Are you acquainted with Bowles? I see, by his last elegy (written at Bath), you are near neighbours. "And I can think I can see the groves again — was it the voice of thee — 'T was not the voice of thee, my buried friend — who dries with her dark locks the tender tear" — are touches as true to nature as any in his other elegy, written at the hot wells, about poor Russell, &c. — You are doubtless acquainted with it. — *Thursday*.

I do not know that I entirely agree with you in your stricture upon my Sonnet to Innocence. To men whose hearts are not quite deadened by their commerce with the world, Innocence (no longer familiar) becomes an awful idea. So I felt when I wrote it. Your other censures (qualified and sweeten'd, tho', with praises somewhat extravagant) I perfectly coincide with. Yet I chuse to retain the word "lunar," — indulge a "lunatic" in his loyalty to his mistress the moon. I have just been reading a most pathetic copy of verses on Sophia Pringle, who was hanged and burn'd for coining.

One of the strokes of pathos (which are very many, all somewhat obscure) is "She lifted up her guilty forger to heaven." A note explains by forger her right hand, with which she forged or coined the base metal! For pathos read bathos. You have put me out of conceit with my blank verse by your *Religious Musings*. I think it will come to nothing. I do not like 'em enough to send 'em. I have just been reading a book, which I may be too partial to, as it was the delight of my childhood; but I will recommend it to you — it is Izaak Walton's *Complete Angler*! All the scientific part you may omit in reading. The dialogue is very simple, full of pastoral beauties, and will charm you. Many pretty old verses are interspersed. This letter, which would be a week's work reading only, I do not wish you to answer in less than a month. I shall be richly content with a letter from you some day early in July — tho' if you get anyhow *settled* before then pray let me know it immediately: 't would give me such satisfaction. Concerning the Unitarian chapel, the salary is the only scruple that the most rigid moralist would admit as valid. Concerning the tutorage, — is not the salary low, and absence from your family unavoidable? London is the only fostering soil for Genius.

Nothing more occurs just now, so I will leave you in mercy one small white spot empty below, to repose your eyes upon, fatigued as they must be with the wilderness of words they have by this

time painfully travell'd thro'. God love you, Coleridge, and prosper you thro' life, tho' mine will be loss if your lot is to be cast at Bristol or at Nottingham or anywhere but London. Our loves to Mrs. C——.

C. L.

#### IV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

*(Apparently a continuation of a letter the first part of which is missing)*

Monday Night [June 13, 1796].

Unfurnished at present with any sheet-filling subject, I shall continue my letter gradually and journal-wise. My second thoughts entirely coincide with your comments on *Joan of Arc*, and I can only wonder at my childish judgment which overlooked the 1st book and could prefer the 9th: not that I was insensible to the soberer beauties of the former, but the latter caught me with its glare of magic, — the former, however, left a more pleasing general recollection in my mind. Let me add, the 1st book was the favourite of my sister — and *I* now, with Joan, often “think on Domremi and the fields of Arc.” I must not pass over without acknowledging my obligations to your full and satisfactory account of personifications. I have read it again and again, and it will be a guide to my future taste. Perhaps I had estimated Southey's merits too much by number, weight, and measure. I now



agree completely and entirely in your opinion of the genius of Southey. Your own image of melancholy is illustrative of what you teach, and in itself masterly. I conjecture it is "dis-branched" from one of your embryo "hymns." When they are mature of birth (were I you) I should print 'em in one separate volume, with *Religious Musings* and your part of the *Joan of Arc*. Birds of the same soaring wing should hold on their flight in company. Once for all (and by renewing the subject you will only renew in me the condemnation of Tantalus), I hope to be able to pay you a visit (if you are then at Bristol) some time in the latter end of August or beginning of September for a week or fortnight; before that time, office business puts an absolute veto on my coming.

And if a sigh that speaks regret of happier times appear,  
A glimpse of joy that we have met shall shine and dry the  
tear.

Of the blank verses I spoke of, the following lines are the only tolerably complete ones I have writ out of not more than one hundred and fifty. That I get on so slowly you may fairly impute to want of practice in composition, when I declare to you that (the few verses which you have seen excepted) I have not writ fifty lines since I left school. It may not be amiss to remark that my grandmother (on whom the verses are written) lived housekeeper in a family the fifty or sixty last years of her life — that she was a woman of

exemplary piety and goodness — and for many years before her death was terribly afflicted with a cancer in her breast which she bore with true Christian patience. You may think that I have not kept enough apart the ideas of her heavenly and her earthly master, but recollect I have designedly given in to her own way of feeling — and if she had a failing, 't was that she respected her master's family too much, not revered her Maker too little. The lines begin imperfectly, as I may probably connect 'em if I finish at all, — and if I do, Biggs shall print 'em in a more economical way than you yours, for (Sonnets and all) they won't make a thousand lines as I propose completing 'em, and the substance must be wire-drawn.

*Tuesday Evening, June 14, 1796.*

I am not quite satisfied now with the Chatterton, and with your leave will try my hand at it again. A master joiner, you know, may leave a cabinet to be finished, when his own hands are full. To your list of illustrative personifications, into which a fine imagination enters, I will take leave to add the following from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wife for a Month*; 't is the conclusion of a description of a sea-fight; — “The game of *death* was never played so nobly; the meagre thief grew wanton in his mischiefs, and his shrunk hollow eyes smiled on his ruins.” There is fancy in these of a lower order from *Bonduca*;



— “Then did I see these valiant men of Britain, like boding owls creep into tods of ivy, and hoot their fears to one another nightly.” Not that it is a personification; only it just caught my eye in a little extract book I keep, which is full of quotations from B. and F. in particular, in which authors I can’t help thinking there is a greater richness of poetical fancy than in any one, Shakspeare excepted. Are you acquainted with Massinger? At a hazard I will trouble you with a passage from a play of his called *A Very Woman*. The lines are spoken by a lover (disguised) to his faithless mistress. You will remark the fine effect of the double endings. You will by your ear distinguish the lines, for I write ’em as prose. “Not far from where my father lives, *a lady*, a neighbour by, blest with as great a *beauty* as nature durst bestow without *undoing*, dwelt, and most happily, as I thought then, and blest the house a thousand times she *dwelt in*. This beauty, in the blossom of my youth, when my first fire knew no adulterate *incense*, nor I no way to flatter but my *fondness*; in all the bravery my friends could *show me*, in all the faith my innocence could *give me*, in the best language my true tongue could *tell me*, and all the broken sighs my sick heart *lend me*, I sued and served; long did I serve this *lady*, long was my travail, long my trade to *win her*; with all the duty of my soul I SERVED HER.” “Then she must love.” “She did, but never me: she could not *love me*;

she would not love, she hated, — more, she scorn'd me; and in so poor and base a way *abused me* for all my services, for all my *bounties*, so bold neglects flung on me" — "What out of love, and worthy love, I *gave her* (shame to her most unworthy mind,) to fools, to girls, to fiddlers and her boys she flung, all in disdain of me." One more passage strikes my eye from B. and F.'s *Palamon and Arcite*. One of 'em complains in prison:

This is all our world;  
We shall know nothing here but one another,  
Hear nothing but the clock that tells our woes;  
The vine shall grow, but we shall never see it, &c.

Is not the last circumstance exquisite? I mean not to lay myself open by saying they exceed Milton, and perhaps Collins, in sublimity. But don't you conceive all poets after Shakspeare yield to 'em in variety of genius? Massinger treads close on their heels; but you are most probably as well acquainted with his writings as your humble servant. My quotations, in that case, will only serve to expose my barrenness of matter. Southey in simplicity and tenderness, is excelled decidedly only, I think, by Beaumont and F. in his [their] *Maid's Tragedy* and some parts of *Philaster* in particular, and elsewhere occasionally; and perhaps by Cowper in his *Crazy Kate*, and in parts of his translation, such as the speeches of Hecuba and Andromache. I long to know your opinion of that translation. The *Odyssey* especially is surely very Homeric. What nobler than the

appearance of Phœbus at the beginning of the Iliad — the lines ending with “Dread sounding, bounding on the silver bow !”

I beg you will give me your opinion of the translation ; it afforded me high pleasure. As curious a specimen of translation as ever fell into my hands, is a young man’s in our office, of a French novel. What in the original was literally “amiable delusions of the fancy,” he proposed to render “the fair frauds of the imagination !” I had much trouble in licking the book into any meaning at all. Yet did the knave clear fifty or sixty pounds by subscription and selling the copyright. The book itself not a week’s work ! To-day’s portion of my journalising epistle has been very dull and poverty-stricken. I will here end.

*Tuesday Night.*

I have been drinking egg-hot and smoking Oronooko (associated circumstances, which ever forcibly recall to my mind our evenings and nights at the Salutation) ; my eyes and brain are heavy and asleep, but my heart is awake ; and if words came as ready as ideas, and ideas as feelings, I could say ten hundred kind things. Coleridge, you know not my supreme happiness at having one on earth (though counties separate us) whom I can call a friend. Remember you those tender lines of Logan ? —

Our broken friendships we deplore,  
And loves of youth that are no more ;

No after friendships e'er can raise  
Th' endearments of our early days,  
And ne'er the heart such fondness prove,  
As when we first began to love.

I am writing at random, and half-tipsy, what you may not *equally* understand, as you will be sober when you read it ; but *my* sober and *my* half-tipsy hours you are alike a sharer in. Good night.

Then up rose our bard, like a prophet in drink,  
Craighdoroch, thou 'lt soar when creation shall sink.

BURNS

*Thursday* [June 16, 1796].

I am now in high hopes to be able to visit you, if perfectly convenient on your part, by the end of next month — perhaps the last week or fortnight in July. A change of scene and a change of faces would do me good, even if that scene were not to be Bristol, and those faces Coleridge's and his friends. In the words of Terence, a little altered, “*Tædet me hujus quotidiani mundi.*” I am heartily sick of the every-day scenes of life. I shall half wish you unmarried (don't show this to Mrs. C.) for one evening only, to have the pleasure of smoking with you, and drinking egg-hot in some little smoky room in a pot-house, for I know not yet how I shall like you in a decent room, and looking quite happy. My best love and respects to Sara notwithstanding.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES LAMB

## V.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Probably begun on Wednesday, June 29. P.M., July 1, 1796.]

The first moment I can come I will, but my hopes of coming yet awhile yet hang on a ticklish thread. The coach I come by is immaterial, as I shall so easily by your direction find ye out. My mother has grown so entirely helpless (not having any use of her limbs) that Mary is necessarily confined from ever sleeping out, she being her bedfellow. She thanks you tho' and will accompany me in spirit. Most exquisite are the lines from Withers. Your own lines introductory to your poem on Self run smoothly and pleasurably, and I exhort you to continue 'em. What shall I say to your Dactyls? They are what you would call good per se, but a parody on some of 'em is just now suggesting itself, and you shall have it rough and unlicked. I mark with figures the lines parodied.

4. — Sórely your Dáctyls do drág along límp-footed.
5. — Sád is the méasure that hángs a clod róund 'em so,
6. — Méagre, and lánguid, procláiming its wrétchedness.
1. — Wéary, unsátisfied, nót little síck of 'em,
11. — Córd is my tíred heart, Í have no chárity.
2. — Páinfully trávv'ling thus óver the rúgged road.
7. — Ó begone, Méasure, half Látin, half Énglish, then.
12. — Dísmal your Dáctyls are, Gód help ye, rhýming Ones.

I *possibly* may not come this fortnight — therefore all thou hast to do is not to look for me any particular day, only to write word immediately

if at any time you quit Bristol, lest I come and Taffy be not at home. I *hope* I can come in a day or two. But young Savory of my office is suddenly taken ill in this very nick of time and I must officiate for him till he can come to work again. Had the knave gone sick and died and putrefied at any other time, philosophy might have afforded one comfort, but just now I have no patience with him. Quarles I am as great a stranger to as I was to Withers. I wish you would try and do something to bring our elder bards into more general fame. I writhe with indignation when in books of criticism, where commonplace quotation is heaped upon quotation, I find no mention of such men as Massinger, or Beaumont and Fletcher, men with whom succeeding dramatic writers (Otway alone excepted) can bear no manner of comparison. Stupid Knox hath noticed none of 'em among his extracts.

*Thursday.* — Mrs. C. can scarce guess how she has gratified me by her very kind letter and sweet little poem. I feel that I *should* thank her in rhyme, but she must take my acknowledgment at present in plain honest prose. The uncertainty in which I yet stand whether I can come or no damps my spirits, reduces me a degree below prosaical, and keeps me in a suspense that fluctuates between hope and fear. Hope is a charming, lively, blue-eyed wench, and I am always glad of her company, but could dispense with



the visitor she brings with her, her younger sister, Fear, a white-liver'd, lily-cheeked, bashful, palpitating, awkward hussey, that hangs like a green girl at her sister's apronstrings, and will go with her whithersoever *she* goes.

For the life and soul of me I could not improve those lines in your poem on the *Prince and Princess*, so I changed them to what you bid me and left 'em at Perry's. I think 'em altogether good, and do not see why you were solicitous about *any* alteration.

I have not yet seen, but will make it my business to see, to-day's *Chronicle*, for your verses on Horne Tooke. Dyer stanza'd him in one of the papers t'other day, but I think unsuccessfully. Tooke's friends' meeting was I suppose a dinner of CONDOLENCE.

I am not sorry to find you (for all Sara) immersed in clouds of smoke and metaphysic. You know I had a sneaking kindness for this last noble science, and you taught me some smattering of it. I look to become no mean proficient under your tuition.

Coleridge, what do you mean by saying you wrote to me about Plutarch and Porphyry — I received no such letter, nor remember a syllable of the matter, yet am not apt to forget any part of your epistles, least of all an injunction like that. I will cast about for 'em, tho' I am a sad hand to know what books are worth, and both those worthy gentlemen are alike out of my line. To-

morrow I shall be less suspensive and in better cue to write, so good-bye at present.

*Friday Evening.* — That execrable aristocrat and knave Richardson has given me an absolute refusal of leave! The *poor man* cannot guess at my disappointment. Is it not hard, “this dread dependance on the low-bred mind?” Continue to write to me, tho’, and I must be content——  
Our loves and best good wishes attend upon you both.  
LAMB

Savory did return, but there are two or three more ill and absent, which was the plea for refusing me. I will never commit my peace of mind by depending on such a wretch for a favor in future, so shall never have heart to ask for holidays again. The man next him in office, Cartwright, furnished him with the objections.  
C. LAMB

#### NOTE

[The dactyls were Coleridge’s only in the third stanza; the remainder were Southey’s. The poem is known as *The Soldier’s Wife*, printed in Southey’s *Poems*, 1797, running thus,—

Weary way-wanderer languid and sick at heart  
Travelling painfully over the rugged road,  
Wild-visag’d Wanderer! ah for thy heavy chance!

Sorely thy little one drags by thee bare-footed,  
Cold is the baby that hangs at thy bending back,  
Meagre and livid and screaming its wretchedness.

Woe-begone mother, half anger, half agony,  
As over thy shoulder thou lookest to hush the babe,  
Bleakly the blinding snow beats in thy hagged face.

Thy husband will never return from the war again,  
Cold is thy hopeless heart even as Charity —  
Cold are thy famish'd babes — God help thee, widow'd One.

Bristol, 1795.

Later Southey revised the verses. *The Anti-Jacobin* had the following parody of them :

#### THE SOLDIER'S FRIEND

Come, little drummer boy, lay down your knapsack here:  
I am the soldier's friend — here are some books for you ;  
Nice clever books, by TOM PAINE, the philanthropist.

Here 's half-a-crown for you — here are some hand-bills too —  
Go to the barracks, and give all the soldiers some.  
Tell them the sailors are all in a mutiny.

[*Exit drummer-boy, with hand-bills and  
half-crown. — Manet soldier's friend.*]

Liberty's friends thus all learn to amalgamate,  
Freedom's volcanic explosion prepares itself,  
Despots shall bow to the fasces of liberty,  
Reason, philosophy, "fiddledum, piddledum,"  
Peace and fraternity, higgledy, piggedy,  
Higgledy, piggedy, "fiddledum diddledum."

[*Et caetera, et caetera, et caetera.*]

#### VI. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

The 5th July, 1796.

#### TO SARA AND HER SAMUEL

Was it so hard a thing? I did but ask  
A fleeting holy day. One little week,  
Or haply two, had bounded my request.

What if the jaded Steer, who all day long  
Had borne the heat and labour of the plough,

When evening came and her sweet cooling hour,  
 Should seek to trespass on a neighbour copse,  
 Where greener herbage waved, or clearer streams  
 Invited him to slake his burning thirst?  
 That man were crabbed, who should say him nay :  
 That man were churlish, who should drive him thence !

A blessing light upon your heads, ye good,  
 Ye hospitable pair. I may not come,  
 To catch on Clifden's heights the summer gale :  
 I may not come, a pilgrim, to the "vales  
 Where Avon winds," to taste th' inspiring waves  
 Which Shakespere drank, our British Helicon :  
 Or, with mine eye intent on Redcliffe towers,  
 To drop a tear for that mysterious youth,  
 Cruelly slighted, who to London walls,  
 In evil hour, shap'd his disastrous course.

Complaints, begone ; begone, ill-omen'd thoughts —  
 For yet again, and lo ! from Avon banks  
 Another "minstrel" cometh ! Youth beloved,  
 God and good angels guide thee on thy way,  
 And gentler fortunes wait the friends I love.

C. L.

## VII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

The 6th July, 1796.

Substitute in room of that last confused and  
 incorrect paragraph, following the words "dis-  
 astrous course," these lines

Vide	no	{	With better hopes, I trust, from Avon's vales
3d page of			This other "minstrel" cometh. Youth endear'd,
this epistle.			God and good angels guide thee on thy road,
			And gentler fortunes wait the friends I love.

[*Lamb has crossed through the above lines.*]

Let us prose.

What can I do till you send word what priced and placed house you should like? Islington (possibly) you would not like, to me 't is classical ground. Knightsbridge is a desirable situation for the air of the parks. St. George's Fields is convenient for its contiguity to the Bench. Chuse! But are you really coming to town? The hope of it has entirely disarmed my petty disappointment of its nettles. Yet I rejoice so much on my own account, that I fear I do not feel enough pure satisfaction on yours. Why, surely, the joint editorship of the *Chronicle* must be a very comfortable and secure living for a man.

But should not you read French, or do you? and can you write with sufficient moderation, as 't is call'd, when one suppresses the one half of what one feels, or could say, on a subject, to chime in the better with popular lukewarmness? — White's *Letters* are near publication. Could you review 'em, or get 'em reviewed? Are you not connected with the *Critical Review*? His frontispiece is a good conceit: Sir John learning to dance, to please Madame Page, in dress of doublet, etc., forms the upper half; and modern pantaloons, with shoes, etc., of the eighteenth century, form the lower half — and the whole work is full of goodly quips and rare fancies, "all deftly masqued like hoar antiquity," — much superior to Dr. Kenrick's *Falstaff's Wedding*, which you may have seen. Allen sometimes laughs at su-

perstition, and religion, and the like. A living fell vacant lately in the gift of the Hospital. White informed him that he stood a fair chance for it. He scrupled and scrupled about it, and at last (to use his own words) "tampered" with *Godwin* to know whether the thing was honest or not. *Godwin* said nay to it, and Allen rejected the living! Could the blindest poor papist have bowed more servilely to his priest or casuist? Why sleep the *Watchman's* answers to that *Godwin*? I beg you will not delay to alter, if you mean to keep, those last lines I sent you. Do that, and read these for your pains:

#### TO THE POET COWPER

Cowper, I thank my God that thou art heal'd!  
Thine was the sorest malady of all;  
And I am sad to think that it should light  
Upon the worthy head! But thou art heal'd,  
And thou art yet, we trust, the destin'd man,  
Born to reanimate the lyre, whose chords  
Have slumber'd, and have idle lain so long,  
To the immortal sounding of whose strings  
Did Milton frame the stately-paced verse;  
Among whose wires with lighter finger playing,  
Our elder bard, Spenser, a gentle name,  
The Lady Muses' dearest darling child,  
Elicited the deffest tunes yet heard  
In hall or bower, taking the delicate ear  
Of Sydney, and his peerless Maiden Queen.

Thou, then, take up the mighty epic strain,  
Cowper, of England's bards, the wisest and the best.



I have read your climax of praises in those three reviews. These mighty spouters-out of panegyric waters have, two of 'em, scattered their spray even upon me, and the waters are cooling and refreshing. Prosaically, the monthly reviewers have made indeed a large article of it, and done you justice. The critical have, in their wisdom, selected not the very best specimens, and notice not, except as one name on the muster-roll, the *Religious Musings*. I suspect Master Dyer to have been the writer of that article, as the substance of it was the very remarks and the very language he used to me one day. I fear you will not accord entirely with my sentiments of Cowper, as *expressed* above (perhaps scarcely just), but the poor gentleman has just recovered from his lunacies, and that begets pity, and pity love, and love admiration, and then it goes hard with people but they lie!

Have you read the ballad called *Leonora*, in the second number of the *Monthly Magazine*? If you have ! ! ! ! There is another fine song, from the same author (Bürger), in the third Number, of scarce inferior merit; and (vastly below these) there are some happy specimens of English hexameters, in an imitation of Ossian, in the fifth Number. For your dactyls I am sorry you are so sore about 'em—a very Sir Fretful! In good troth, the dactyls are good dactyls, but their measure is naught. Be not yourself “half anger, half agony” if I pronounce your darling lines

not to be the best you ever wrote: you have written much.

For the alterations in those lines, let 'em run thus:

I may not come a pilgrim to the  
banks

Of *Avon*, *lucid stream*, to taste the (inspiring wave) was too  
wave commonplace.

Which Shakspeare drank, our  
British Helicon;

Or, with mine eye, &c., &c.

To *muse*, in *tears*, on that mys- (better than "drop a tear")  
terious youth, &c.

Then the last paragraph alter thus:

Complaint, begone; begone, un- better refer to my own  
kind reproof. "complaint" solely than

Take up, my song, take up a half to that and half to Chat-  
merrier strain, terton, as in your copy,

For yet again, and lo! from which creates a confusion,  
Avon's vales — "ominous fears," &c.

Another minstrel cometh!  
youth *endeared*,

God and good angels, &c., as  
before.

Have a care, good Master poet, of the Statute *de Contumeliâ*. What do you mean by calling Madame Mara harlot and naughty things? The goodness of the verse would not save you in a court of justice. But are you really coming to town?

Coleridge, a gentleman called in London lately from Bristol, and inquired whether there were any of the family of a Mr. Chambers living; this Mr. Chambers, he said, had been the making

of a friend's fortune who wished to make some return for it. He went away without seeing her. Now, a Mrs. Reynolds, a very intimate friend of ours, whom you have seen at our house, is the only daughter, and all that survives, of Mr. Chambers; and a very little supply would be of service to her, for she married very unfortunately, and has parted with her husband.

Pray find out this Mr. Pember (for that was the gentleman's friend's name); he is an attorney, and lives at Bristol. Find him out, and acquaint him with the circumstances of the case, and offer to be the medium of supply to Mrs. Reynolds, if he chuses to make her a present. She is in very distress circumstances. Mr. Pember, attorney, Bristol; Mr. Chambers lived in the Temple. Mrs. Reynolds, his daughter, was my schoolmistress, and is in the room at this present writing. This last circumstance induced me to write so soon again; I have not further to add; our loves to Sara.

C. LAMB

*Thursday.*

#### NOTE

[The passage at the beginning, before "Let us prose," together with the later passages in the same manner, refers to the poem in the preceding letter, which in slightly different form is printed in editions of Lamb as "Lines to Sara and Her Samuel." In order to complete the letter we have copied the version printed in the *Monthly Magazine*, January, 1797:

LINES ADDRESSED, FROM LONDON, TO SARA AND S. T. C.  
AT BRISTOL, IN THE SUMMER OF 1796

Was it so hard a thing ? I did but ask  
A fleeting holiday, a little week.

What, if the jaded steer, who, all day long,  
Had borne the heat and burthen of the plough,  
When ev'ning came, and her sweet cooling hour,  
Should seek to wander in a neighbour copse,  
Where greener herbage wav'd, or clearer streams  
Invited him to slake his burning thirst ?  
The man were crabbed who should say him nay ;  
The man were churlish who should drive him thence.

A blessing light upon your worthy heads,  
Ye hospitable pair ! I may not come  
To catch, on Clifden's heights, the summer gale ;  
I may not come to taste the Avon wave ;  
Or, with mine eye intent on Redcliffe tow'rs,  
To muse in tears on that mysterious youth,  
Cruelly slighted, who, in evil hour,  
Shap'd his advent'rous course to London walls !

Complaint, be gone ! and, ominous thoughts, away !  
Take up, my Song, take up a merrier strain ;  
For yet again, and lo ! from Avon's vales,  
Another Minstrel cometh. Youth endear'd,  
God and good Angels guide thee on thy road,  
And gentler fortunes 'wait the friends I love !]

## VIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[P.M. September 27, 1796.]

My dearest friend, — White or some of my friends or the public papers by this time may have informed you of the terrible calamities that have fallen on our family. I will only give you the outlines. My poor dear dearest sister in a fit of insanity has been the death of her own mother. I was at hand only time enough to snatch the knife out of her grasp. She is at present in a madhouse, from whence I fear she must be moved to an hospital.

God has preserved to me my senses, — I eat

and drink and sleep, and have my judgment I believe very sound. My poor father was slightly wounded, and I am left to take care of him and my aunt. Mr. Norris of the Bluecoat school has been very, very kind to us, and we have no other friend ; but thank God, I am very calm and composed, and able to do the best that remains to do. Write, — as religious a letter as possible, but no mention of what is gone and done with. — With me “the former things are passed away,” and I have something more to do than to feel.

God Almighty have us all in His keeping !

C. LAMB

Mention nothing of poetry. I have destroyed every vestige of past vanities of that kind. Do as you please, but if you publish, publish mine (I give free leave) without name or initial, and never send me a book I charge you.

Your own judgment will convince you not to take any notice of this yet to your dear wife. You look after your family ; I have my reason and strength left to take care of mine. I charge you, don't think of coming to see me. Write. I will not see you if you come. God Almighty love you and all of us !

[The following is Coleridge's reply :]

[September 28, 1796.]

Your letter, my friend, struck me with a mighty horror. It rushed upon me and stupefied my feelings. You bid me write

you a religious letter ; I am not a man who would attempt to insult the greatness of your anguish by any other consolation. Heaven knows that in the easiest fortunes there is much dissatisfaction and weariness of spirit ; much that calls for the exercise of patience and resignation ; but in storms, like these, that shake the dwelling and make the heart tremble, there is no middle way between despair and the yielding up of the whole spirit unto the guidance of faith.

And surely it is a matter of joy, that your faith in Jesus has been preserved ; the Comforter that should relieve you is not far from you. But as you are a Christian, in the name of that Saviour who was filled with bitterness and made drunken with wormwood, I conjure you to have recourse in frequent prayer to “ his God and your God,” the God of mercies and father of all comfort. Your poor father is, I hope, almost senseless of the calamity ; the unconscious instrument of Divine Providence knows it not, and your mother is in heaven. It is sweet to be roused from a frightful dream by the song of birds, and the gladsome rays of the morning. Ah, how infinitely more sweet to be awakened from the blackness and amazement of a sudden horror by the glories of God manifest and the hallelujahs of angels.

As to what regards yourself, I approve altogether of your abandoning what you justly call vanities. I look upon you as a man, called by sorrow and anguish and a strange desolation of hopes into quietness, and a soul set apart and made peculiar to God ; we cannot arrive at any portion of heavenly bliss without in some measure imitating Christ. And they arrive at the largest inheritance who imitate the most difficult parts of his character, and, bowed down and crushed under foot, cry in fulness of faith, “ Father, thy will be done.”

I wish above measure to have you for a little while here ; no visitants shall blow on the nakedness of your feelings ; you shall be quiet, and your spirit may be healed. I see no possible objection, unless your father’s helplessness prevent you, and unless you are necessary to him. If this be not the case, I charge you write me that you will come.

I charge you, my dearest friend, not to dare to encourage gloom or despair ; you are a temporary sharer in human miser-



ies that you may be an eternal partaker of the divine nature.  
I charge you, if by any means it be possible, come to me.

I remain, your affectionate,

S. T. COLERIDGE

#### NOTE

[The following is the report of the inquest upon Mrs. Lamb which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* for September 26, 1796. The tragedy had occurred on Thursday, September 22 :

On Friday afternoon the Coroner and a respectable Jury sat on the body of a Lady in the neighbourhood of Holborn, who died in consequence of a wound from her daughter the preceding day. It appeared by the evidence adduced, that while the family were preparing for dinner, the young lady seized a case knife laying on the table, and in a menacing manner pursued a little girl, her apprentice, round the room ; on the eager calls of her helpless infirm mother to forbear, she renounced her first object, and with loud shrieks approached her parent.

The child by her cries quickly brought up the landlord of the house, but too late — the dreadful scene presented to him the mother lifeless, pierced to the heart, on a chair, her daughter yet wildly standing over her with the fatal knife, and the venerable old man, her father, weeping by her side, himself bleeding at the forehead from the effects of a severe blow he received from one of the forks she had been madly hurling about the room.

For a few days prior to this the family had observed some symptoms of insanity in her, which had so much increased on the Wednesday evening, that her brother early the next morning went in quest of Dr. Pitcairn — had that gentleman been met with, the fatal catastrophe had, in all probability, been prevented.

It seems the young Lady had been once before, in her earlier years, deranged, from the harassing fatigues of too much business. — As her carriage towards her mother was ever affectionate in the extreme, it is believed that to the increased attentiveness, which her parents' infirmities called for by day and night, is to be attributed the present insanity of this ill-fated young woman.

It has been stated in some of the Morning Papers, that she has an insane brother also in confinement — this is without foundation.

The Jury of course brought in their Verdict, *Lunacy*.]

## IX. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[P. M. October 3, 1796.]

My dearest friend, — Your letter was an inestimable treasure to me. It will be a comfort to you, I know, to know that our prospects are somewhat brighter. My poor dear dearest sister, the unhappy and unconscious instrument of the Almighty's judgments to our house, is restored to her senses; to a dreadful sense and recollection of what has past, awful to her mind, and impressive (as it must be to the end of life), but temper'd with religious resignation, and the reasonings of a sound judgment, which in this early stage knows how to distinguish between a deed committed in a transient fit of frenzy and the terrible guilt of a mother's murder. I have seen her. I found her this morning calm and serene, far, very very far, from an indecent forgetful serenity; she has a most affectionate and tender concern for what has happened.

Indeed from the beginning, frightful and hopeless as her disorder seemed, I had confidence enough in her strength of mind and religious principle to look forward to a time when *even she* might recover tranquillity. God be praised, Coleridge, wonderful as it is to tell, I have never once been otherwise than collected and calm; even on the dreadful day and in the midst of the terrible scene I preserved a tranquillity, which bystanders may have construed into indifference,

a tranquillity not of despair ; is it folly or sin in me to say that it was a religious principle that *most* supported me ? I allow much to other favorable circumstances. I felt that I had something else to do than to regret ; on that first evening my aunt was lying insensible, to all appearance like one dying, — my father, with his poor forehead plaistered over from a wound he had received from a daughter dearly loved by him, and who loved him no less dearly, — my mother a dead and murder'd corpse in the next room — yet was I wonderfully supported. I closed not my eyes in sleep that night, but lay without terrors and without despair. I have lost no sleep since.

I had been long used not to rest in things of sense, had endeavored after a comprehension of mind, unsatisfied with the “ignorant present time,” and this kept me up. I had the whole weight of the family thrown on me, for my brother, little disposed (I speak not without tenderness for him) at any time to take care of old age and infirmities, had now, with his bad leg, an exemption from such duties, and I was now left alone. One little incident may serve to make you understand my way of managing my mind. Within a day or two after the fatal ONE, we drest for dinner a tongue, which we had had salted for some weeks in the house. As I sat down a feeling like remorse struck me, — this tongue poor Mary got for me, and can I partake of it

now, when she is far away ; a thought occurred and relieved me, — if I give in to this way of feeling, there is not a chair, a room, an object in our rooms, that will not awaken the keenest griefs, I must rise above such weaknesses. — I hope this was not want of true feeling. I did not let this carry me, tho', too far.

On the very second day (I date from the day of horrors) as is usual in such cases there were a matter of twenty people I do think supping in our room. They prevailed on me to eat *with them* (for to eat I never refused). They were all making merry in the room ! Some had come from friendship, some from busy curiosity, and some from interest ; I was going to partake with them, when my recollection came that my poor dead mother was lying in the next room, the very next room, a mother who thro' life wished nothing but her children's welfare, — indignation, the rage of grief, something like remorse, rushed upon my mind in an agony of emotion, — I found my way mechanically to the adjoining room, and fell on my knees by the side of her coffin, asking forgiveness of Heaven, and sometimes of her, for forgetting her so soon. Tranquillity returned, and it was the only violent emotion that mastered me, and I think it did me good.

I mention these things because I hate concealment, and love to give a faithful journal of what passes within me. Our friends have been very

good. Sam Le Grice who was then in town was with me the first three or four days, and was as a brother to me, gave up every hour of his time, to the very hurting of his health and spirits, in constant attendance and humouring my poor father. Talk'd with him, read to him, play'd at cribbage with him (for so short is the old man's recollection, that he was playing at cards, as tho' nothing had happened, while the coroner's inquest was sitting over the way!) Samuel wept tenderly when he went away, for his mother wrote him a very severe letter on his loitering so long in town, and he was forced to go.

Mr. Norris of Christ Hospital has been as a father to me, Mrs. Norris as a mother; tho' we had few claims on them. A gentleman, brother to my godmother, from whom we never had right or reason to expect any such assistance, sent my father twenty pounds,—and to crown all these God's blessings to our family at such a time, an old lady, a cousin of my father and aunt's, a gentlewoman of fortune, is to take my aunt and make her comfortable for the short remainder of her days.

My aunt is recover'd and as well as ever, and highly pleased at thoughts of going,—and has generously given up the interest of her little money (which was formerly paid my father for her board) wholly and solely to my sister's use. Reckoning this we have, Daddy and I, for our two selves and an old maid servant to look after

him, when I am out, which will be necessary, £170 or £180 (rather) a year, out of which we can spare £50 or £60 at least for Mary, while she stays at Islington, where she must and shall stay during her father's life for his and her comfort. I know John will make speeches about it, but she shall not go into an hospital.

The good lady of the madhouse, and her daughter, an elegant sweet-behaved young lady, love her and are taken with her amazingly, and I know from her own mouth she loves them, and longs to be with them as much.—Poor thing, they say she was but the other morning saying, she knew she must go to Bethlem for life; that one of her brothers would have it so, but the other would wish it not, but be obliged to go with the stream; that she had often as she passed Bedlam thought it likely “here it may be my fate to end my days —” conscious of a certain flightiness in her poor head oftentimes, and mindful of more than one severe illness of that nature before.

A legacy of £100, which my father will have at Xmas, and this £20 I mentioned before, with what is in the house will much more than set us clear;—if my father, an old servant maid, and I, can't live and live comfortably on £130 or £120 a year we ought to burn by slow fires, and I almost would, that Mary might not go into an hospital. Let me not leave one unfavourable impression on your mind respecting my



brother. Since this has happened he has been very kind and brotherly ; but I fear for his mind, — he has taken his ease in the world, and is not fit himself to struggle with difficulties, nor has much accustomed himself to throw himself into their way, — and I know his language is already, “ Charles, you must take care of yourself, you must not abridge yourself of a single pleasure you have been used to,” &c., &c., and in that style of talking.

But you, a necessarian, can respect a difference of mind, and love what *is amiable* in a character not perfect. He has been very good, but I fear for his mind. Thank God, I can unconnect myself with him, and shall manage all my father’s monies in future myself, if I take charge of Daddy, which poor John has not even hinted a wish, at any future time even, to share with me. The lady at this madhouse assures me that I may dismiss immediately both doctor and apothecary, retaining occasionally an opening draught or so for a while, and there is a less expensive establishment in her house, where she will only not have a room and nurse to herself for £50 or guineas a year — the outside would be £60 — You know by economy how much more, even, I shall be able to spare for her comforts.

She will, I fancy, if she stays, make one of the family, rather than of the patients, and the old and young ladies I like exceedingly, and she loves dearly, and they, as the saying is, take to

her very extraordinarily, if it is extraordinary that people who see my sister should love her. Of all the people I ever saw in the world my poor sister was most and thoroughly devoid of the least tincture of selfishness; I will enlarge upon her qualities, poor dear dearest soul, in a future letter for my own comfort, for I understand her thoroughly; and if I mistake not, in the most trying situation that a human being can be found in, she will be found (I speak not with sufficient humility, I fear, but humanly and foolishly speaking) she will be found, I trust, uniformly great and amiable; God keep her in her present mind, to whom be thanks and praise for all His dispensations to mankind.

LAMB

Coleridge, continue to write; but do not for ever offend me by talking of sending me cash. Sincerely, and on my soul, we do not want it. God love you both!

I will write again very soon. Do you write directly.

These mentioned good fortunes and change of prospects had almost brought my mind over to the extreme the very opposite to despair; I was in danger of making myself too happy; your letter brought me back to a view of things which I had entertained from the beginning; I hope (for Mary I can answer) but I hope that *I* shall thro' life never have less recollection nor a fainter

impression of what has happened than I have now; 't is not a light thing, nor meant by the Almighty to be received lightly. I must be serious, circumspect, and deeply religious thro' life; by such means may *both* of us escape madness in future, if it so please the Almighty.

Send me word how it fares with Sara. I repeat it, your letter was and will be an inestimable treasure to me; you have a view of what my situation demands of me like my own view; and I trust a just one.

#### NOTE

[A word perhaps on Lamb's salary might be fitting here. For the first three years, from joining the East India House on April 5, 1792, he received nothing. This probationary period over, he was given £40 for the year 1795-1796. This, however, was raised to £70 in 1796 and there were means of adding to it a little, by extra work and by a small holiday grant. In 1797 it was £80, in 1799 £90, and from that time until 1814 it rose by £10 every second year.]

#### X. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[P. M. October 17, 1796.]

My dearest friend, — I grieve from my very soul to observe you in your plans of life veering about from this hope to the other, and settling nowhere. Is it an untoward fatality (speaking humanly) that does this for you, a stubborn irresistible concurrence of events? or lies the fault, as I fear it does, in your own mind? You seem

to be taking up splendid schemes of fortune only to lay them down again, and your fortunes are an *ignis fatuus* that has been conducting you, in thought, from Lancaster Court, Strand, to somewhere near Matlock, then jumping across to Dr. Somebody's whose son's tutor you were likely to be, and would to God the dancing demon *may* conduct you at last in peace and comfort to the "life and labors of a cottager."

You see, from the above awkward playfulness of fancy, that my spirits are not quite depressed ; I should ill deserve God's blessings, which since the late terrible event have come down in mercy upon us, if I indulged regret or querulousness, — Mary continues serene and chearful, — I have not by me a little letter she wrote to me, for, tho' I see her almost every day, yet we delight to write to one another (for we can scarce see each other but in company with some of the people of the house) ; I have not the letter by me, but will quote from memory what she wrote in it. "I have no bad terrifying dreams. At midnight when I happen to awake, the nurse sleeping by the side of me, with the noise of the poor mad people around me, I have no fear. The spirit of my mother seems to descend and smile upon me, and bid me live to enjoy the life and reason which the Almighty has given me : I shall see her again in heaven ; she will then understand me better ; my grandmother, too, will understand me better, and will then say no more, as she used to do,

‘Polly, what are those poor crazy moyther’d brains of yours thinking of always?’ — Poor Mary, my mother indeed *never understood* her right. She loved her, as she loved us all, with a mother’s love; but in opinion, in feeling, and sentiment, and disposition, bore so distant a resemblance to her daughter that she never understood her right. Never could believe how much *she* loved her, but met her caresses, her protestations of filial affection, too frequently with coldness and repulse. — Still she was a good mother; God forbid I should think of her but *most* respectfully, *most* affectionately. Yet she would always love my brother above Mary, who was not worthy of one tenth of that affection which Mary had a right to claim. But it is my sister’s gratifying recollection that every act of duty and of love she could pay, every kindness (and I speak true, when I say to the hurting of her health, and, most probably, in great part to the derangement of her senses), thro’ a long course of infirmities and sickness, she could shew her, SHE EVER DID.

I will some day, as I promised, enlarge to you upon my sister’s excellencies: ’t will seem like exaggeration; but I will do it. At present short letters suit my state of mind best. So take my kindest wishes for your comfort and establishment in life, and for Sara’s welfare and comforts with you. God love you! God love us all!

C. LAMB

## XI.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 24, 1796. [Monday.]

Coleridge, I feel myself much your debtor for that spirit of confidence and friendship which dictated your last letter. May your soul find peace at last in your cottage life! I only wish you were but settled. Do continue to write to me. I read your letters with my sister, and they give us both abundance of delight. Especially they please us two, when you talk in a religious strain,—not but we are offended occasionally with a certain freedom of expression, a certain air of mysticism, more consonant to the conceits of pagan philosophy than consistent with the humility of genuine piety. To instance now in your last letter you say, “it is by the press that God hath given finite spirits both evil and good (I suppose you mean *simply* bad men and good men) a portion as it were of His omnipresence!”

Now, high as the human intellect comparatively will soar, and wide as its influence, malign or salutary, can extend, is there not, Coleridge, a distance between the divine mind and it, which makes such language blasphemy? Again, in your first fine consolatory epistle you say, “you are a temporary sharer in human misery that you may be an eternal partaker of the divine nature.” What more than this do those men say who are for exalting the man Christ Jesus into the second



person of an unknown Trinity,—men, whom you or I scruple not to call idolaters? Man, full of imperfections, at best, and subject to wants which momentarily remind him of dependence; man, a weak and ignorant being, “servile” from his birth “to all the skiey influences,” with eyes sometimes open to discern the right path, but a head generally too dizzy to pursue it; man, in the pride of speculation, forgetting his nature, and hailing in himself the future God, must make the angels laugh.

Be not angry with me, Coleridge; I wish not to cavil; I know I cannot *instruct* you; I only wish to *remind* you of that humility which best becometh the Christian character. God, in the New Testament (*our best guide*), is represented to us in the kind, condescending, amiable, familiar light of a *parent*; and in my poor mind 't is best for us so to consider of Him, as our *heavenly* Father, and our *best Friend*, without indulging too bold conceptions of His nature. Let us learn to think humbly of ourselves, and rejoice in the appellation of “dear children,” “brethren,” and “co-heirs with Christ of the promises,” seeking to know no further.

I am not insensible, indeed I am not, of the value of that first letter of yours, and I shall find reason to thank you for it again and again long after that blemish in it is forgotten. It will be a fine lesson of comfort to us, whenever we read it; and read it we often shall, Mary and I.

Accept our loves and best kind wishes for the welfare of yourself and wife and little one. Nor let me forget to wish you joy on your birthday so lately past; I thought you had been older. My kind thanks and remembrances to Lloyd.

God love us all, and may He continue to be the Father and the Friend of the whole human race!

C. LAMB

*Sunday Evening.*

## XII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 28, 1796.

My dear friend,—I am not ignorant that to be a partaker of the divine nature is a phrase to be met with in Scripture: I am only apprehensive lest we in these latter days, tintured (some of us perhaps pretty deeply) with mystical notions and the pride of metaphysics, might be apt to affix to such phrases a meaning which the primitive users of them, the simple fishermen of Galilee for instance, never intended to convey. With that other part of your apology I am not quite so well satisfied. You seem to me to have been straining your comparing faculties to bring together things infinitely distant and unlike; the feeble narrow-sphered operations of the human intellect and the everywhere diffused mind of Deity, the peerless wisdom of Jehovah. Even the expression appears to me inaccurate, “portion of omnipresence:” omni-

presence is an attribute whose very essence is unlimitedness. How can omnipresence be affirmed of anything in part? But enough of this spirit of disputatiousness. Let us attend to the proper business of human life, and talk a little together respecting our domestic concerns. Do you continue to make me acquainted with what you were doing, and how soon you are likely to be settled once for all.

I have satisfaction in being able to bid you rejoice with me in my sister's continued reason and composedness of mind. Let us both be thankful for it. I continue to visit her very frequently, and the people of the house are vastly indulgent to her; she is likely to be as comfortably situated in all respects as those who pay twice or thrice the sum. They love her, and she loves them, and makes herself very useful to them. Benevolence sets out on her journey with a good heart, and puts a good face on it, but is apt to limp and grow feeble, unless she calls in the aid of self-interest by way of crutch. In Mary's case, as far as respects those she is with, 't is well that these principles are so likely to co-operate. I am rather at a loss sometimes for books for her, — our reading is somewhat confined, and we have nearly exhausted our London library. She has her hands too full of work to read much: but a little she must read; for reading was her daily bread.

Have you seen Bowles's new poem on *Hope*? What character does it bear? Has he exhausted

his stores of tender plaintiveness? or is he the same in this last as in all his former pieces? The duties of the day call me off from this pleasant intercourse with my friend; so for the present adieu.

Now for the truant borrowing of a few minutes from business. Have you met with a new poem called the *Pursuits of Literature*? From the extracts in the *British Review* I judge it to be a very humorous thing; in particular I remember what I thought a very happy character of Dr. Darwin's poetry. Among all your quaint readings did you ever light upon Walton's *Complete Angler*? I asked you the question once before; it breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart; there are many choice old verses interspersed in it; it would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it; it would Christianise every discordant angry passion; pray make yourself acquainted with it. Have you made it up with Southey yet? Surely one of you two must have been a very silly fellow, and the other not much better, to fall out like boarding-school misses; kiss, shake hands, and make it up.

When will he be delivered of his new epic? *Madoc*, I think, is to be the name of it; though that is a name not familiar to my ears. What progress do you make in your hymns? What review are you connected with? If with any, why do you delay to notice White's book? You are justly offended at its profaneness; but surely you have undervalued its *wit*, or you would have

been more loud in its praises. Do not you think that in *Slender's* death and madness there is most exquisite humour, mingled with tenderness, that is irresistible, truly Shakspearian? Be more full in your mention of it. Poor fellow, he has (very undeservedly) lost by it; nor do I see that it is likely ever to reimburse him the charge of printing, &c. Give it a lift, if you can.

I suppose you know that Allen's wife is dead, and he, just situated as he was, never the better, as the worldly people say, for her death, her money with her children being taken off his hands.

I am just now wondering whether you will ever come to town again, Coleridge; 't is among the things I dare not hope, but can't help wishing. For myself, I can live in the midst of town luxury and superfluity, and not long for them, and I can't see why your children might not hereafter do the same. Remember, you are not in Arcadia when you are in the west of England, and they may catch infection from the world without visiting the metropolis. But you seem to have set your heart upon this same cottage plan; and God prosper you in the experiment! I am at a loss for more to write about; so 't is as well that I am arrived at the bottom of my paper.

God love you, Coleridge! Our best loves and tenderest wishes await on you, your Sara, and your little one.

C. L.

### XIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

November 8, 1796.

My brother, my friend, — I am distressed for you, believe me I am; not so much for your painful, troublesome complaint, which, I trust, is only for a time, as for those anxieties which brought it on, and perhaps even now may be nursing its malignity. Tell me, dearest of my friends, is your mind at peace, or has anything, yet unknown to me, happened to give you fresh disquiet, and steal from you all the pleasant dreams of future rest? Are you still (I fear you are) far from being comfortably settled? Would to God it were in my power to contribute towards the bringing of you into the haven where you would be! But you are too well skilled in the philosophy of consolation to need my humble tribute of advice; in pain and in sickness, and in all manner of disappointments, I trust you have that within you which shall speak peace to your mind. Make it, I entreat you, one of your puny comforts that I feel for you and share all your griefs with you.

I feel as if I were troubling you about *little* things, now I am going to resume the subject of our last two letters; but it may divert us both from unpleasanter feelings to make such matters, in a manner, of importance. Without further apology, then, it was not that I did not relish, that I did not in my heart thank you for, those



little pictures of your feelings which you lately sent me, if I neglected to mention them. You may remember you had said much the same things before to me on the same subject in a former letter, and I considered those last verses as only the identical thoughts better clothed ; either way (in prose or verse) such poetry must be welcome to me. I love them as I love the *Confessions of Rousseau*, and for the same reason ; the same frankness, the same openness of heart, the same disclosure of all the most hidden and delicate affections of the mind : they make me proud to be thus esteemed worthy of the place of friend-confessor, brother-confessor, to a man like Coleridge. This last is, I acknowledge, language too high for friendship ; but it is also, I declare, too sincere for flattery.

Now, to put on stilts, and talk magnificently about trifles, — I condescend, then, to your counsel, Coleridge, and allow my first sonnet (sick to death am I to make mention of my sonnets, and I blush to be so taken up with them, indeed I do) — I allow it to run thus, *Fairy Land*, &c., &c., as I last wrote it.

The fragments I now send you I want printed to get rid of 'em ; for, while they stick burr-like to my memory, they tempt me to go on with the idle trade of versifying, which I long — most sincerely I speak it — I long to leave off, for it is unprofitable to my soul ; I feel it is ; and these questions about words, and debates about alter-

ations, take me off, I am conscious, from the proper business of *my* life. Take my sonnets once for all, and do not propose any re-amendments, or mention them again in any shape to me, I charge you. I blush that my mind can consider them as things of any worth. And pray admit or reject these fragments, as you like or dislike them, without ceremony. Call 'em Sketches, Fragments, or what you will, but do not entitle any of my *things* Love Sonnets, as I told you to call 'em; 't will only make me look little in my own eyes; for it is a passion of which I retain *nothing*; 't was a weakness, concerning which I may say, in the words of Petrarch (whose Life is now open before me), "if it drew me out of some vices, it also prevented the growth of many virtues, filling me with the love of the creature rather than the Creator, which is the death of the soul."

Thank God, the folly has left me for ever; not even a review of my love verses renews one wayward wish in me; and if I am at all solicitous to trim 'em out in their best apparel, it is because they are to make their appearance in good company.

Now to my fragments. Lest you have lost my *Grandame*, she shall be one. 'T is among the few verses I ever wrote (that to Mary is another) which profit me in the recollection. God love her, — and may we two never love each other less!

These, Coleridge, are the few sketches I have thought worth preserving ; how will they relish thus detached ? Will you reject all or any of them ? They are thine : do whatsoever thou listest with them. My eyes ache with writing long and late, and I wax wondrous sleepy ; God bless you and yours, me and mine ! Good night.

C. LAMB

I will keep my eyes open reluctantly a minute longer to tell you that I love you for those simple, tender, heart-flowing lines with which you conclude your last, and in my eyes best, sonnet (so you call 'em), —

So, for the mother's sake, the child was dear,  
And dearer was the mother for the child.

Cultivate simplicity, Coleridge, or rather, I should say, banish elaborateness ; for simplicity springs spontaneous from the heart, and carries into daylight its own modest buds and genuine, sweet, and clear flowers of expression. I allow no hot-beds in the gardens of Parnassus. I am unwilling to go to bed, and leave my sheet unfilled (a good piece of night-work for an idle body like me), so will finish with begging you to send me the earliest account of your complaint, its progress, or (as I hope to God you will be able to send me) the tale of your recovery, or at least amendment. My tenderest remembrances to your Sara.

Once more good night.

#### XIV. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

November 14, 1796.

Coleridge, I love you for dedicating your poetry to Bowles. Genius of the sacred fountain of tears, it was he who led you gently by the hand through all this valley of weeping, showed you the dark green yew trees and the willow shades where, by the fall of waters, you might indulge an uncomplaining melancholy, a delicious regret for the past, or weave fine visions of that awful future, —

When all the vanities of life's brief day  
Oblivion's hurrying hand hath swept away,  
And all its sorrows, at the awful blast  
Of the archangel's trump, are but as shadows past.

I have another sort of dedication in my head for my few things, which I want to know if you approve of and can insert. I mean to inscribe them to my sister. It will be unexpected, and it will give her pleasure ; or do you think it will look whimsical at all ? As I have not spoke to her about it, I can easily reject the idea. But there is a monotony in the affections, which people living together or, as we do now, very frequently seeing each other, are apt to give in to : a sort of indifference in the expression of kindness for each other, which demands that we should sometimes call to our aid the trickery of surprise. Do you publish with Lloyd or without him ? in either case my little portion may come last, and

after the fashion of orders to a country correspondent I will give directions how I should like to have 'em done. The title-page to stand thus, —

POEMS

CHIEFLY LOVE SONNETS

BY

CHARLES LAMB, OF THE INDIA HOUSE

Under this title the following motto, which, for want of room, I put over leaf, and desire you to insert, whether you like it or no. May not a gentleman choose what arms, mottoes, or armorial bearings the herald will give him leave, without consulting his republican friend, who might advise none? May not a publican put up the sign of the *Saracen's Head*, even though his undiscerning neighbour should prefer, as more genteel, the *Cat and Gridiron*?

(MOTTO)

This beauty, in the blossom of my youth,  
When my first fire knew no adulterate incense,  
Nor I no way to flatter but my fondness,  
In the best language my true tongue could tell me,  
And all the broken sighs my sick heart lend me,  
I sued and served. Long did I love this lady.

MASSINGER

## THE DEDICATION

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THE FEW FOLLOWING POEMS,  
CREATURES OF THE FANCY AND THE FEELING  
IN LIFE'S MORE VACANT HOURS,  
PRODUCED, FOR THE MOST PART, BY  
LOVE IN IDLENESS,  
ARE,  
WITH ALL A BROTHER'S FONDNESS,  
INSCRIBED TO  
MARY ANN LAMB,  
THE AUTHOR'S BEST FRIEND AND SISTER

---

This is the pomp and paraphernalia of parting, with which I take my leave of a passion which has reigned so royally (so long) within me; thus, with its trappings of laureateship, I fling it off, pleased and satisfied with myself that the weakness troubles me no longer. I am wedded, Coleridge, to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father. Oh! my friend, I think sometimes, could I recall the days that are past, which among them should I choose? not those "merrier days," not the "pleasant days of hope," not "those wanderings with a fair hair'd maid," which I have so often and so feelingly regretted, but the days, Coleridge, of a *mother's* fondness for her *school-boy*. What would I give to call her back to earth for *one* day, on my knees to ask her pardon for all those little asperities of temper which, from time to time, have given her gentle spirit pain; and the day, my friend, I trust will come; there will be "time enough" for kind offices of love, if



“Heaven’s eternal year” be ours. Hereafter, her meek spirit shall not reproach me.

Oh, my friend, cultivate the filial feelings! and let no man think himself released from the kind “charities” of relationship: these shall give him peace at the last; these are the best foundation for every species of benevolence. I rejoice to hear, by certain channels, that you, my friend, are reconciled with all your relations. ’T is the most kindly and natural species of love, and we have all the associated train of early feelings to secure its strength and perpetuity. Send me an account of your health; *indeed* I am solicitous about you. God love you and yours!

C. LAMB

#### XV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

December 2, 1796.

I have delay’d writing thus long, not having by me my copy of your poems, which I had lent. I am not satisfied with all your intended omissions. Why omit 40, 63, 84: above all, let me protest strongly against your rejecting the *Complaint of Ninathoma*, 86. The words, I acknowledge, are Ossian’s, but you have added to them the *Music of Caril*. If a vicarious substitute be wanting, sacrifice (and ’t will be a piece of self-denial *too*) the *Epitaph on an Infant*, of which its author seems so proud, so tenacious. Or, if your heart be set on *perpetuating* the four-line-wonder, I’ll tell you

what [to] do: sell the copyright of it at once to a country statuary; commence in this manner Death's prime poet laureate; and let your verses be adopted in every village round instead of those hitherto famous ones, —

Afflictions sore long time I bore;  
Physicians were in vain.

I have seen your last very beautiful poem in the *Monthly Magazine*; write thus, and you most generally have written thus, and I shall never quarrel with you about simplicity.

With regard to my lines, —

Laugh all that weep, &c.,

I would willingly sacrifice them, but my portion of the volume is so ridiculously little, that in honest truth I can't spare them. As things are, I have very slight pretensions to participate in the title-page. — White's book is at length reviewed in the *Monthly*; was it your doing or Dyer's, to whom I sent him? Or rather do you not write in the *Critical*? for I observed in an article of this month's a line quoted out of *that* sonnet on Mrs. Siddons, —

With eager wond'ring and perturb'd delight.

And a line from *that* sonnet would not readily have occurred to a stranger. That sonnet, Coleridge, brings afresh to my mind the time when you wrote those on Bowles, Priestly, Burke. 'T was two Christmases ago, and in that nice little smoky

room at the *Salutation*, which is even now continually presenting itself to my recollection, with all its associated train of pipes, tobacco, egg-hot, welsh-rabbits, metaphysics and poetry.

Are we NEVER to meet again ? How differently I am circumstanced now ! I have never met with any one, nevershall meet with any one, who could or can compensate me for the loss of your society. I have no one to talk all these matters about to : I lack friends ; I lack books to supply their absence. But these complaints ill become me : let me compare my present situation, prospects, and state of mind, with what they were but two months back — *but* two months. O my friend, I am in danger of forgetting the awful lessons then presented to me : remind me of them ; remind me of my duty. Talk seriously with me when you do write. I thank you, from my heart I thank you, for your solicitude about my sister. She is quite well ; but must not, I fear, come to live with us yet a good while. In the first place, because at present it would hurt her and hurt my father for them to be together ; secondly, from a regard to the world's good report, for I fear, I fear, tongues will be busy *whenever* that event takes place.

Some have hinted, one man has prest it on me, thatshe should be in perpetual confinement : what she hath done to deserve, or the necessity of such an hardship, I see not ; do you ? I am starving at the India house, near seven o'clock without my

dinner, and so it has been and will be almost all the week. I get home at night o'er-wearied, quite faint, — and then to CARDS with my father, who will not let me enjoy a meal in peace ; but I must conform to my situation, and I hope I am, for the most part, not unthankful.

I am got home at last, and, after repeated games at cribbage, have got my father's leave to write a while ; with difficulty got it, for when I expostulated about playing any more, he very aptly replied, " If you won't play with me, you might as well not come home at all." The argument was unanswerable, and I set to afresh.

I told you, I do not approve of your omissions. Neither do I quite coincide with you in your arrangements : I have not time to point out a better, and I suppose some self-associations of your own have determined their place as they now stand. Your beginning, indeed, with the *Joan of Arc* lines I coincide entirely with : I love a splendid outset, a magnificent portico ; and the diapason is grand. The *Religious Musings* — when I read them, I think how poor, how unelevated, unoriginal, my blank verse is, " Laugh all that weep " especially, where the subject demanded a grandeur of conception ; and I ask what business they have among yours ; but friendship covereth a multitude of defects. Why omit 73 ? At all events, let me plead for those former pages, — 40, 63, 84, 86. I should like, for old acquaintance' sake, to spare 62. 119 would have made a figure among

Shenstone's *Elegies*: you may admit it or reject, as you please. In the *Man of Ross* let the old line stand as it used, "wine-cheer'd moments," much better than the lame present one. 94, change the harsh word "foodful" into "dulcet" or, if not too harsh, "nourishing." 91, "moveless:" is that as good as "moping"? 8, would it not read better omitting those two lines last but six about Inspiration? I want some loppings made in the *Chatterton*; it wants but a little to make it rank among the finest irregular lyrics I ever read. Have you time and inclination to go to work upon it, or is it too late, or do you think it needs none?

Don't reject those verses in one of your *Watchmen*, "Dear native brook," &c.; nor, I think, those last lines you sent me, in which "all effortless" is without doubt to be preferred to "inactive." If I am writing more than ordinarily dully, 't is that I am stupefied with a toothache. 37, would not the concluding lines of the first paragraph be well omitted, and it go on "So to sad sympathies," &c.? In 40, if you retain it, "wove" the learned Toil is better than "urge," which spoils the personification. Hang it, do not omit 48, 52, 53. What you do retain, tho', call sonnets for God's sake, and not effusions, — spite of your ingenious anticipation of ridicule in your Preface. The last five lines of 50 are too good to be lost, the rest is not much worth.

My tooth becomes importunate: I must finish. Pray, pray, write to me: if you knew with what

an anxiety of joy I open such a long packet as you last sent me, you would not grudge giving a few minutes now and then to this intercourse (the only intercourse, I fear we two shall ever have), this conversation, with your friend, — such I boast to be called.

God love you and yours.

Write to me when you move, lest I direct wrong.

Has Sara no poems to publish? Those lines 129 are probably too light for the volume where the *Religious Musings* are; but I remember some very beautiful lines address by somebody at Bristol to somebody at London.

God bless you once more.

C. LAMB

*Thursday Night.*

## XVI. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Dated at end: December 5, 1796.]

### TO A YOUNG LADY GOING OUT TO INDIA

Hard is the heart, that does not melt with Ruth  
When care sits cloudy on the brow of Youth,  
When bitter griefs the *female* bosom swell  
And Beauty meditates a fond farewell  
To her loved native land, and early home,  
In search of peace thro' "stranger climes to roam."

The Muse, with glance prophetic, sees her stand,  
Forsaken, silent Lady, on the strand  
Of farthest India, sickening at the war  
Of waves slow-beating, dull upon the shore,  
Stretching, at gloomy intervals, her eye  
O'er the wide waters vainly to espy



The long-expected bark, in which to find  
Some tidings of a world she has left behind.

In that sad hour shall start the gushing tear  
For scenes her childhood loved, now doubly dear,  
In that sad hour shall frantic memory awake  
Pangs of remorse for slighted England's sake,  
And for the sake of many a tender tie  
Of love or friendship pass'd too lightly by.  
Unwept, unpitied, midst an alien race,  
And the cold looks of many a stranger face,  
How will her poor heart bleed, and chide the day,  
That from her country took her far away.

[*Lamb has struck his pen through the foregoing poem.*]

Coleridge, the above has some few decent [lines in] it, and in the paucity of my portion of your volume may as well be inserted ; I would also wish to retain the following if only to perpetuate the memory of so exquisite a pleasure as I have often received at the performance of the tragedy of Douglas, when Mrs. Siddons has been the Lady Randolph. Both pieces may be inserted between the sonnets and the sketches ; in which latter, the last leaf but one of them, I beg you to alter the words "pain and want" to "pain and grief," this last being a more familiar and ear-satisfying combination. Do it I beg of you. To understand the following, if you are not acquainted with the play, you should know that on the death of Douglas his mother threw herself down a rock ; and that at that time Scotland was busy in repelling the Danes.

## THE TOMB OF DOUGLAS

*See the Tragedy of that name*

When her son, her Douglas, died,  
To the steep rock's fearful side  
Fast the frantic mother hied.

O'er her blooming warrior dead  
Many a tear did Scotland shed,  
And shrieks of long and loud lament  
From her Grampian hills she sent.

Like one awakening from a trance,  
She met the shock of Lochlin's lance.      Denmark  
On her rude invader foe  
Return'd an hundredfold the blow.  
Drove the taunting spoiler home :  
Mournful thence she took her way  
To do observance at the tomb,  
Where the son of Douglas [lay].

Round about the tomb did go  
In solemn state and order slow,  
Silent pace, and black attire,  
Earl, or knight, or good esquire,  
Whoe'er by deeds of valour done  
In battle had high honors won ;  
Whoe'er in their pure veins could trace  
The blood of Douglas' noble race.

With them the flower of minstrels came,  
And to their cunning harps did frame  
In doleful numbers piercing rhymes,  
Such strains as in the olden times  
Had soothed the spirit of Fingal  
Echoing thro' his fathers' Hall.

“ Scottish maidens, drop a tear  
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier.

Brave youth and comely 'bove compare ;  
All golden shone his burnish'd hair ;  
Valor and smiling courtesy  
Played in the sunbeams of his eye.  
Closed are those eyes that shone so fair  
And stain'd with blood his yellow hair.  
Scottish maidens drop a tear  
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier."

"Not a tear, I charge you, shed  
For the false Glenalvon dead ;  
Unpitied let Glenalvon lie,  
Foul stains to arms and chivalry."

"Behind his back the traitor came,  
And Douglas died without his fame."

[*Lamb has struck his pen through the remainder*]

Thane or lordling, think no scorn  
Of the poor and lowly-born.  
In brake obscure or lonely dell  
The simple flowret prospers well ;  
The *gentler* virtues cottage-bred,  
Thrive best beneath the humble shed.  
Low-born hinds, opprest, obscure,  
Ye who patiently endure  
To bend the knee and bow the head,  
And thankful eat *another's bread*,  
Well may ye mourn your best friend dead,  
Till life with grief together end :  
He would have been the poor man's friend.

Bending, warrior, o'er thy grave,  
Young light of Scotland early spent !  
Thy country thee shall long lament,  
Douglas, "*Beautiful and Brave !*"  
And oft to after times shall tell,  
*In life's young prime my Hero fell.*

At length I have done with verse-making. Not that I relish other people's poetry less, — theirs comes from 'em without effort, mine is the difficult operation of a brain scanty of ideas, made more difficult by disuse. I have been reading the *Task* with fresh delight. I am glad you love Cowper. I could forgive a man for not enjoying Milton, but I would not call that man my friend who should be offended with the "divine chit-chat of Cowper." Write to me. God love you and yours,  
C. L.

XVII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE<sup>1</sup>

[December 10, 1796.]

I am sorry I cannot now relish your poetical present so thoroughly as I feel it deserves; but I do not the less thank Lloyd and you for it. In truth, Coleridge, I am perplexed, and at times almost cast down. I am beset with perplexities. The old Hag of a wealthy relation, who took my aunt off our hands in the beginning of trouble, has found out that she is "indolent and mulish" — I quote her own words, and that her attachment to us is so strong, that she can never be happy apart. The Lady, with delicate Irony, remarks that, if I am not an Hypocrite! I shall rejoyce to receive her again, and that it will be a means of making me more fond of home to have

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given in its chronological order in the back of Vol. I.

so dear a friend to come home to! The fact is she is jealous of my aunt's bestowing any kind recollections on us while she enjoys the patronage of her roof. She says she finds it inconsistent with her own "ease and tranquillity," to keep her any longer, and in fine summons me to fetch her home. Now, much as I should rejoice to transplant the poor old creature from the chilling air of such patronage, yet I know how straiten'd we are already, how unable already to answer any demand, which sickness or any extraordinary expence may make. I know this, and all unused as I am to struggle with perplexities, I am somewhat nonplus'd, to say no worse. This prevents me from a through [thorough] relish of what Lloyd's kindness and yours have furnish'd me with. I thank you tho' from my heart, and feel myself not quite alone in the earth.

Before I offer, what alone I have to offer, a few obvious remarks on the poems you sent me, I can but notice the odd coincidence of two young men, in one age, carolling their grandmothers. Love,—what L[lloyd] calls the "feverish and romantic tye," hath too long domineered over all the charities of home: the dear domestic ties of father, brother, husband. The amiable and benevolent Cowper has a beautiful passage in his *Task*,—some natural and painful reflections on his deceased parents: and Hayley's sweet lines to his mother are notoriously the

best things he ever wrote. Cowper's lines some of them are —

How gladly would the man recall to life  
The boy's neglected sire, — a mother too !  
That softer name, perhaps more gladly still,  
Might he demand them at the gates of Death.

I cannot but smile to see my granny so gayly deck'd forth : tho', I think, whoever altered "thy" praises to "her" praises — "thy" honor'd memory to "her" honor'd memory, did wrong — they best exprest my feelings. There is a pensive state of recollection in which the mind is disposed to apostrophize the departed objects of its attachment ; and breaking loose from grammatical precision changes from the 1st to the 3d, and from the 3d to the 1st person, just as the random fancy or the feeling directs. Among Lloyd's sonnets, [the] 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, [and] 11th are eminently beautiful. I think him too lavish of his expletives ; the *dos* and *dids*, when they occur too often, bring a quaintness with them along with their simplicity, or rather air of antiquity, which the patrons of them seem desirous of conveying.

The lines on Friday are very pleasing : " Yet calls itself in pride of Infancy woman or man," &c. " Affection's tottering troop " are prominent beauties. Another time when my mind were more at ease, I would be more particular in my remarks, and I would postpone them now, only I want some diversion of mind. The *Melancholy*



*Man* is a charming piece of poetry, only the "whys" with submission are too many. Yet the questions are too good to be any of 'em omitted. For those lines of yours, page 18, omitted in magazine, I think the 3 first better retained — the 3 last, which are somewhat "simple" in the most affronting sense of the word, better omitted — to this my taste directs me — I have no claim to prescribe to yours. "Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies" is an exquisite line, but you knew *that* when you wrote 'em! and I trifle in pointing such out. 'T is altogether the sweetest thing to me you ever wrote — 't is all honey "No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart, — Blest hour, it was a Luxury to *be*!" I recognise feelings, which I may taste again, if tranquillity have not taken her flight for ever, and I will not believe but I shall be happy, very happy again. The next poem to your friend is very beautiful — need I instance the pretty fancy of "the rock's collected tears" — or that original line "pours all its healthful greenness on the soul"? — let it be, since you ask *me*, "as neighb'ring fountains each reflect the whole," tho' that is somewhat harsh — indeed the ending is not so finish'd as the rest, which if you omit in your forthcoming edition, you will do the volume wrong, and the very binding will cry out. Neither shall you omit the two following poems. "The hour when we shall meet again" — is fine fancy, 't is true, but fancy catering in the Service of the

feeling — fetching from her stores most splendid banquets to satisfy her. Do not, do not omit it. Your sonnet to the River Otter excludes those equally beautiful lines, which deserve not to be lost, “as the tired savage,” &c., and I prefer that copy in your *Watchman*. I plead for its preference.

Another time I may notice more particularly Lloyd’s, Southey’s, Dermody’s Sonnets. I shrink from them now : my teasing lot makes me too confused for a clear judgment of things, too selfish for sympathy ; and these ill-digested, meaningless remarks I have imposed on myself as a task, to lull reflection, as well as to shew you I did not neglect reading your valuable present. Return my acknowledgments to Lloyd ; you two seem to be about realising an Elysium upon earth, and, no doubt, I shall be happier. Take my best wishes. Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. C., and give little David Hartley — God bless its little heart ! — a kiss for me. Bring him up to know the meaning of his Christian name, and what that name (imposed upon him) will demand of him.

God love you !

C. LAMB

I write, for one thing, to say that I shall write no more, till you send me word where you are, for you are so soon to move. My sister is pretty well, thank God. We think of you very often. God bless you, continue to be my correspondent,

and I will strive to fancy that this world is *not* "all barrenness."

### XVIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

December 10, 1796.

I had put my letter into the post rather hastily, not expecting to have to acknowledge another from you so soon. This morning's present has made me alive again: my last night's epistle was childishly querulous; but you have put a little life into me, and I will thank you for your remembrance of me, while my sense of it is yet warm; for if I linger a day or two I may use the same phrase of acknowledgment, or similar; but the feeling that dictates it now will be gone. I shall send you a *caput mortuum*, not a *cor vivens*. Thy *Watchman's*, thy bellman's, verses, I do retort upon thee, thou libellous varlet, — why, you cried the hours yourself, and who made you so proud? But I submit, to show my humility, most implicitly to your dogmas. I reject entirely the copy of verses you reject.

With regard to my leaving off versifying, you have said so many pretty things, so many fine compliments, ingeniously decked out in the garb of sincerity, and undoubtedly springing from a present feeling somewhat like sincerity, that you might melt the most un-muse-ical soul, — did you not (now for a Rowland compliment for your profusion of Olivers) — did you not in your very

epistle, by the many pretty fancies and profusion of heart displayed in it, dissuade and discourage me from attempting anything after you. At present I have not leisure to make verses, nor anything approaching to a fondness for the exercise. In the ignorant present time, who can answer for the future man? "At lovers' perjuries Jove laughs;" and poets have sometimes a disingenuous way of forswearing their occupation. This, though, is not my case. The tender cast of soul, sombred with melancholy and subsiding recollections, is favourable to the Sonnet or the Elegy; but from

The sainted growing woof,  
The teasing troubles keep aloof.

The music of poesy may charm for a while the importunate teasing cares of life; but the teased and troubled man is not in a disposition to make that music.

You sent me some very sweet lines relative to Burns; but it was at a time when, in my highly agitated and perhaps distorted state of mind, I thought it a duty to read 'em hastily and burn 'em. I burned all my own verses, all my books of extracts from Beaumont and Fletcher and a thousand sources: I burned a little journal of my foolish passion which I had a long time kept —

Noting ere they past away,  
The little lines of yesterday.

I almost burned all your letters; I did as bad, I lent 'em to a friend to keep out of my brother's

sight, should he come and make inquisition into our papers, for, much as he dwelt upon your conversation while you were among us and delighted to be with you, it has been his fashion ever since to depreciate and cry you down, — you were the cause of my madness, you and your damned foolish sensibility and melancholy ; and he lamented with a true brotherly feeling that we ever met, even as the sober citizen, when his son went astray upon the mountains of Parnassus, is said to have “cursed Wit and Poetry and Pope.” I quote wrong, but no matter. These letters I lent to a friend to be out of the way for a season; but I have claimed them in vain, and shall not cease to regret their loss. Your packets, posterior to the date of my misfortunes, commencing with that valuable consolatory epistle, are every day accumulating: they are sacred things with me.

Publish your *Burns* when and how you like, it will be new to me : my memory of it is very confused, and tainted with unpleasant associations. Burns was the god of my idolatry, as Bowles of yours. I am jealous of your fraternising with Bowles, when I think you relish him more than Burns or my old favourite, Cowper. But you conciliate matters when you talk of the “divine chit-chat” of the latter: by the expression I see you thoroughly relish him.

I love Mrs. Coleridge for her excuses an hundredfold more dearly than if she heaped “line upon line,” out-Hannah-ing Hannah More, and

had rather hear you sing "Did a very little baby" by your family fireside, than listen to you when you were repeating one of Bowles's sweetest sonnets in your sweet manner, while we two were indulging sympathy, a solitary luxury, by the fireside at the *Salutation*. Yet have I no higher ideas of heaven. Your company was one "cordial in this melancholy vale:" the remembrance of it is a blessing partly, and partly a curse. When I can abstract myself from things present, I can enjoy it with a freshness of relish; but it more constantly operates to an unfavourable comparison with the uninteresting converse I always and *only* can partake in.

Not a soul loves Bowles here; scarce one has heard of Burns; few but laugh at me for reading my Testament: they talk a language I understand not; I conceal sentiments that would be a puzzle to them. I can only converse with you by letter and with the dead in their books. My sister, indeed, is all I can wish in a companion; but our spirits are alike poorly, our reading and knowledge from the self-same sources, our communication with the scenes of the world alike narrow: never having kept separate company, or any "company" "*together*;" never having read separate books, and few books *together*, — what knowledge have we to convey to each other? In our little range of duties and connections, how few sentiments can take place, without friends, with few books, with a taste for religion rather than a strong religious habit! We need some support,



some leading-strings to cheer and direct us. You talk very wisely, and be not sparing of *your advice*. Continue to remember us, and to show us you do remember us: we will take as lively an interest in what concerns you and yours. All I can add to your happiness will be sympathy. You can add to mine *more*: you can teach me wisdom.

I am indeed an unreasonable correspondent; but I was unwilling to let my last night's letter go off without this qualifier: You will perceive by this my mind is easier, and you will rejoice. I do not expect or wish you to write till you are moved; and of course shall not, till you announce to me that event, think of writing myself. Love to Mrs. Coleridge and David Hartley, and my kind remembrance to Lloyd if he is with you.

C. LAMB

I will get *Nature and Art*, — have not seen it yet, nor any of Jeremy Taylor's works.

#### XIX.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

January 2, 1797.

Your success in the higher species of the ode is such as bespeaks you born for achievements of loftier enterprise than to linger in the lowly train of songsters and sonneters. Sincerely I think your ode one of the finest I have read. The opening is in the spirit of the sublimest allegory. The idea of the “skirts of the departing year, seen

far onwards, waving on the wind" is one of those noble hints at which the reader's imagination is apt to kindle into grand conceptions. Do the words "impetuous" and "solemnize" harmonize well in the same line? Think and judge.

In the second strophe, there seems to be too much play of fancy to be consistent with that continued elevation we are taught to expect from the strain of the foregoing. The parenthized line (by the way I abominate parentheses in this kind of poetry) at the beginning of seventh page, and indeed all that gradual description of the throes and pangs of nature in childbirth, I do not much like, and those four first lines — I mean "tomb gloom anguish and languish" — rise not above mediocrity. In the epode, your mighty genius comes again: "I marked ambition," &c. Thro' the whole epode indeed you carry along our souls in a full spring-tide of feeling and imagination. Here is the Storm of Music, as Cowper expresses it. Would it not be more abrupt "Why does the northern Conqueress stay" or "Where does the northern Conqueress stay"? — this change of measure, rather than the feebler "Ah! whither." "Foul her life and dark her tomb, mighty army of the dead, dance like deathflies," &c.: here is genius, here is poetry, rapid, irresistible. The concluding line, is it not a personification — without use? "Nec deus intersit" — except indeed for rhyme's sake.

Would the laws of strophe and antistrophe,

which, if they are as unchangeable, I suppose are about as wise, [as] the Mede and Persian laws, admit of expurging that line altogether, and changing the preceding one to "and he, poor madman, deem'd it quench'd in endless night"? — *fond* madman or *proud* madman if you will, but *poor* is more contemptuous. If I offer alterations of my own to your poetry, and admit not yours in mine, it is upon the principle of a present to a rich man being graciously accepted, and the same present to a poor man being considered as in insult. To return: the antistrophe that follows is not inferior in grandeur or original; but is I think not faultless, — e. g., how is Memory *alone*, when all the ethereal multitude are there? Reflect.

Again, "storiedst thy sad hours" is harsh, I need not tell you, but you have gained your point in expressing much meaning in few words: "Purple locks and snow-white glories," "mild Arcadians ever blooming," "seas of milk and ships of amber," these are things the Muse talks about when, to borrow H. Walpole's witty phrase, she is not finely-phrenzied, only a little light-headed, that's all. "Purple locks." They may manage things differently in fairyland, but your "golden tresses" are more to my fancy. The spirit of the Earth is a most happy conceit, and the last line is one of the luckiest I ever heard — "*and stood up beautiful* before the cloudy seat." I cannot enough admire it. 'T is somehow picturesque in the very sound.

The second antistrophe (what is the meaning of these things?) is fine and faultless (or to vary the alliteration and not diminish the affectation) beautiful and blameless. I only except to the last line as meaningless after the preceding, and useless entirely — besides, why disjoin “nature and the world” here, when you had confounded both in their pregnancy: “the common earth and nature,” recollect, a little before — And there is a dismal superfluity in the unmeaning vocable “unhurl’d” — the worse, as it is so evidently a rhyme-fetch. — “Death-like he dozes” is a prosaic conceit — indeed all the Epode as far as “brother’s corse” I most heartily commend to annihilation. The enthusiast of the lyre should not be so feebly, so tediously, delineative of his own feelings; ’t is not the way to become “Master of our affections.” The address to Albion is very agreeable, and concludes even beautifully: “speaks safety to his island child” — “Sworded” — epithet *I* would change for “cruel.” The immediately succeeding lines are prosaic: “mad avarice” is an unhappy combination; and “the coward distance yet with kindling pride” is not only reprehensible for the antithetical turn, but as it is a quotation: “safe distance” and “coward distance” you have more than once had recourse to before — And the Lyric Muse, in her enthusiasm, should talk the language of her country, something removed from common use, something “recent,” unborrowed.

The dreams of destruction "soothing her fierce solitude," are vastly grand and terrific : still you weaken the effect by that superfluous and easily-conceived parenthesis that finishes the page. The foregoing image, few minds *could* have conceived, few tongues could have so cloath'd ; "mutt'ring destempered triumph" &c. is vastly fine. I hate imperfect beginnings and endings.

Now your concluding stanza is worthy of so fine an ode. The beginning was awakening and striking ; the ending is soothing and solemn — Are you serious when you ask whether you shall admit this ode ? it would be strange infatuation to leave out your *Chatterton* ; mere insanity to reject this. Unless you are fearful that the splendid thing may be a means of "eclipsing many a softer satellite" that twinkles thro' the volume. Neither omit the annex'd little poem. For my part, detesting alliterations, I should make the first line "Away, with this fantastic pride of woe." Well may you relish Bowles's allegory. I need only tell you, I have read, and will only add, that I dislike ambition's name *gilded* on his helmet-cap, and that I think, among the more striking personages you notice, you omitted the *most* striking, Remorse ! "He saw the trees — the sun — then hied him to his cave again" !!! The second stanza of mania is superfluous ; the first was never exceeded. The second is too methodical ; for *her*. With all its load of beauties, I am more *affected* with the six first stanzas of



the Elegiac poem written during sickness. Tell me your feelings. If the fraternal sentiment conveyed in the following lines will atone for the total want of anything like merit or genius in it, I desire you will print it next after my other sonnet to my sister.

Friend of my earliest years, and childish days,  
My joys, my sorrows, thou with me hast shared  
Companion dear ; and we alike have fared  
Poor pilgrims we, thro' life's unequal ways.  
It were unwisely done, should we refuse  
To cheer our path, as featly as we may,  
Our lonely path to cheer, as travellers use,  
With merry song, quaint tale, or roundelay.  
And we will sometimes talk past troubles o'er,  
Of mercies shewn, and all our sickness heal'd,  
And in his judgments God rememb'ring love ;  
And we will learn to praise God evermore  
For those " Glad tidings of great joy " reveal'd  
By that sooth messenger, sent from above.

1797.

If you think the epithet " sooth " quaint, substitute " blest messenger." I hope you are printing my sonnets, as I directed you — particularly the second. " Methinks " &c. with my last added six lines at ye end : and all of 'em as I last made 'em.

This has been a sad long letter of business, with no room in it for what honest Bunyan terms heart-work. I have just room left to congratulate you on your removal to Stowey ; to wish success to all your projects ; to " bid fair peace " be to that house ; to send my love and



best wishes, breathed warmly, after your dear Sara, and her little David Hartley. If Lloyd be with you, bid him write to me: I feel to whom I am obliged primarily for two very friendly letters I have received already from him. A dainty sweet book that *Art and Nature* is. I am at present re-re-reading Priestley's examination of the Scotch Drs: how the Rogue strings 'em up! three together! You have no doubt read that clear, strong, humorous, most entertaining piece of reasoning. If not, procure it, and be exquisitely amused. I wish I could get more of Priestley's works. Can you recommend me to any more books, easy of access, such as circulating shops afford? God bless you and yours.

Poor Mary is very unwell with a sore throat and a slight species of scarlet fever. God bless her too.

*Monday Morning, at Office.*

## XX.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[January 10, 1797.]

I am completely reconciled to that second strophe, and waive all objection. In spite of the Grecian Lyrists, I persist on [in] thinking your brief personification of Madness useless; reverence forbids me to say, impertinent. Golden locks and snow-white glories are as incongruous as your former, and if the great Italian painters, of whom my friend knows about as much as the man in the

moon, if these great gentlemen be on your side, I see no harm in retaining the purple — the glories that I have observed to encircle the heads of saints and madonnas in those old paintings have been mostly of a dirty drab-color'd yellow — a dull gambogium. Keep your old line : it will excite a confused kind of pleasurable idea in the reader's mind, not clear enough to be called a conception, nor just enough, I think, to reduce to painting. It is a rich line, you say, and riches hide a many faults.

I maintain that in the second antistrophe you *do* disjoin Nature and the world, and contrary to your conduct in the second strophe. "Nature joins her groans," — joins with *whom*, a God's name, but the world or earth in line preceding? But this is being over-curious, I acknowledge. Nor *did* I call the *last* line useless, I only objected to "unhurl'd." I cannot be made to like the former part of that second epode ; I cannot be made to feel it, as I do the parallel places in Isaiah, Jeremy, and Daniel. Whether it is that in the present case the rhyme impairs the efficacy, or that the circumstances are feigned, and we are conscious of a made-up lie in the case, and the narrative is too long-winded to preserve the semblance of truth ; or that lines 8, 9, 10, 14 in particular, 17 and 18 are mean and unenthusiastic ; or that lines 5 to 8 in their change of rhyme shew like art, — I don't know, but it strikes me as something meant to affect, and failing in its purpose. Remember

my waywardness of feeling is single, and singly stands opposed to all your friends, and what is one among many ! This I know, that your quotations from the prophets have never escaped me, and never fail'd to affect me strongly. I hate that simile. I am glad you have amended that parenthesis in the account of Destruction. I like it well now. Only utter [ ? omit ] that history of child-bearing, and all will do well. Let the obnoxious epode remain, to terrify such of your friends as are willing to be terrified. I think I would omit the notes, not as not good *per se*, but as ungenial with the dignity of the ode.

I need not repeat my wishes to have my little sonnets printed verbatim my last way. In particular, I fear lest you should prefer printing my first sonnet, as you have done more than once, “ did the wand of Merlin wave ? ” It looks so like *Mr.* Merlin, the ingenious successor of the immortal Merlin, now living in good health and spirits, and flourishing in magical reputation in Oxford Street; and on my life, one half who read it would understand it so. Do put 'em forth finally as I have, in various letters, settled it ; for first a man's self is to be pleased, and then his friends, — and, of course, the greater number of his friends, if they differ *inter se*. Thus taste may safely be put to the vote. I do long to see our names together — not for vanity's-sake, and naughty pride of heart altogether, for not a living soul, I know or am intimate with, will scarce read the book, — so I shall gain

nothing *quoad famam*, — and yet there is a little vanity mixes in it, I cannot help denying.

I am aware of the unpoetical cast of the six last lines of my last sonnet, and think myself unwarranted in smuggling so tame a thing into the book ; only the sentiments of those six lines are thoroughly congenial to me in my state of mind, and I wish to accumulate perpetuating tokens of my affection to poor Mary ; that it has no originality in its cast, nor anything in the feelings, but what is common and natural to thousands, nor aught properly called poetry, I see ; still it will tend to keep present to my mind a view of things which I ought to indulge. These six lines, too, have not, to a reader, a connectedness with the foregoing. Omit it, if you like. — What a treasure it is to my poor indolent and unemployed mind, thus to lay hold on a subject to talk about, tho' 't is but a sonnet and that of the lowest order ! How mournfully inactive I am ! — 'T is night : good-night.

My sister, I thank God, is nigh recovered. She was seriously ill. Do, in your next letter, and that right soon, give me some satisfaction respecting your present situation at Stowey. Is it a farm you have got ? and what does your worship know about farming ? Coleridge, I want you to write an epic poem. Nothing short of it can satisfy the vast capacity of true poetic genius. Having one great end to direct all your poetical faculties to, and on which to lay out your hopes, your ambition

will shew you to what you are equal. By the sacred energies of Milton, by the dainty sweet and soothing phantasies of honeytongued Spenser, I adjure you to attempt the epic. Or do something more ample than writing an occasional brief ode or sonnet ; something “ to make yourself forever known, — to make the age to come your own.” But I prate ; doubtless you meditate something.

When you are exalted among the lords of epic fame, I shall recall with pleasure, and exultingly, the days of your humility, when you disdained not to put forth in the same volume with mine your religious musings, and that other poem from the *Joan of Arc*, those promising first fruits of high renown to come. You have learning ; you have fancy ; you have enthusiasm ; you have strength and amplitude of wing enow for flights like those I recommend. In the vast and unexplored regions of fairyland, there is ground enough unfound and uncultivated ; search there, and realize your favourite Susquehanah scheme. In all our comparisons of taste, I do not know whether I have ever heard your opinion of a poet, very dear to me, the now out-of-fashion Cowley ; favor me with your judgment of him, and tell me if his prose essays, in particular, as well as no inconsiderable part of his verse, be not delicious. I prefer the graceful rambling of his essays, even to the courtly elegance and ease of Addison, — abstracting from this the latter's



exquisite humour. Why is not your poem on Burns in the *Monthly Magazine*? I was much disappointed. I have a pleasurable but confused remembrance of it.

When the little volume is printed, send me three or four, at all events not more than six copies, and tell me if I put you to any additional expense by printing with you. I have no thought of the kind, and in that case must reimburse you. My epistle is a model of unconnectedness, but I have no particular subject to write on, and must proportion my scribble in some degree to the increase of postage. It is not quite fair, considering how burdensome your correspondence from different quarters must be, to add to it with so little shew of reason. I will make an end for this evening. Sunday Even. Farewell.

Priestly, whom I sin in almost adoring, speaks of "such a choice of company as tends to keep up that right bent and firmness of mind which a necessary intercourse with the world would otherwise warp and relax. Such fellowship is the true balsam of life; its cement is infinitely more durable than that of the friendships of the world, and it looks for its proper fruit and complete gratification to the life beyond the grave." Is there a possible chance for such an one as me to realize in this world such friendships? Where am I to look for 'em? What testimonials shall I bring of my being worthy of such friendship? Alas! the great and good go together in separate



herds, and leave such as me to lag far, far behind in all intellectual, and, far more grievous to say, in all moral, accomplishments. Coleridge, I have not one truly elevated character among my acquaintance: not one Christian; not one but undervalues Christianity. Singly what am I to do? Wesley (have you read his life? was *he* not an elevated character?) Wesley has said, "Religion is not a solitary thing." Alas! it necessarily is so with me, or next to solitary. 'Tis true, you write to me. But correspondence by letter and personal intimacy are very widely different. Do, do write to me, and do some good to my mind, already how much "warped and relaxed" by the world! — 'Tis the conclusion of another evening. Good night. God have us all in his keeping.

If you are sufficiently at leisure, oblige me with an account of your plan of life at Stowey, — your literary occupations and prospects, — in short make me acquainted with every circumstance which, as relating to you, can be interesting to me. Are you yet a Berkleyan? Make me one. I rejoice in being, speculatively, a necessarian. Would to God, I were habitually a practical one. Confirm me in the faith of that great and glorious doctrine, and keep me steady in the contemplation of it. You some time since express an intention you had of finishing some extensive work on the *Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*. Have you let that intention

go? Or are you doing anything towards it? Make to yourself other ten talents.

My letter is full of nothingness. I talk of nothing. But I must talk. I love to write to you. I take a pride in it. It makes me think less meanly of myself. It makes me think myself not totally disconnected from the better part of mankind. I know, I am too dissatisfied with the beings around me; but I cannot help occasionally exclaiming, "Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech, and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar." I know I am no ways better in practice than my neighbours; but I have a taste for religion, an occasional earnest aspiration after perfection, which they have not. I gain nothing by being with such as myself; we encourage one another in mediocrity; I am always longing to be with men more excellent than myself. All this must sound odd to you; but these are my predominant feelings when I sit down to write to you, and I should put force upon my mind were I to reject them. Yet I rejoice, and feel my privilege with gratitude, when I have been reading some wise book, such as I have just been reading,—Priestley on philosophical necessity,—in the thought that I enjoy a kind of communion, a kind of friendship even, with the great and good. Books are to me instead of friends. I wish they did not resemble the latter in their scarceness.

And how does little David Hartley? "*Ecquid*

*in antiquam virtutem?*” — does his mighty name work wonders yet upon his little frame and opening mind? I did not distinctly understand you, — you don’t mean to make an actual ploughman of him? Mrs. C—— is no doubt well; give my kindest respects to her. Is Lloyd with you yet? are you intimate with Southey? What poems is he about to publish? he hath a most prolific brain, and is indeed a most sweet poet. But how can you answer all the various mass of interrogation I have put to you in the course of this sheet. Write back just what you like, only write something, however brief. I have now nigh finished my page, and got to the end of another evening (Monday evening); and my eyes are heavy and sleepy and my brain unsuggestive. I have just heart enough awake to say Good night once more, and God love you, my dear friend; God love us all. Mary bears an affectionate remembrance of you.

CHARLES LAMB

XXI. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Dated at end: January 18, 1797.]

Dear Col., — You have learn’d by this time, with surprise, no doubt, that Lloyd is with me in town. The emotions I felt on his coming so unlooked for are not ill expressed in what follows, and what, if you do not object to them as too personal, and to the world obscure, or other-

wise wanting in worth, I should wish to make a part of our little volume.

I shall be sorry if that volume comes out, as it necessarily must do, unless you print those very schoolboyish verses I sent you on not getting leave to come down to Bristol last summer. I say I shall be sorry that I have addressed you in nothing which can appear in our joint volume.

So frequently, so habitually as you dwell on my thoughts, 't is some wonder those thoughts came never yet in contact with a poetical mood — but you dwell in my heart of hearts, and I love you in all the naked honesty of prose. God bless you, and all your little domestic circle — my tenderest remembrances to your beloved Sara, and a smile and a kiss from me to your dear little David Hartley. The verses I refer to above, slightly amended, I have sent (forgetting to ask your leave, tho' indeed I gave them only your initials) to the *Monthly Magazine*, where they may possibly appear next month, and where I hope to recognise your Poem on Burns.

TO [CHARLES LLOYD] AN UNEXPECTED  
VISITOR

Alone, obscure, without a friend,  
A cheerless, solitary thing,  
Why seeks my Lloyd the stranger out?  
What off'ring can the stranger bring

Of social scenes, home-bred delights,  
That him in aught compensate may

For Stowey's pleasant winter nights,  
For loves and friendships far away ?

In brief oblivion to forego  
Friends, such as thine, so justly dear,  
And be awhile with me content  
To stay, a kindly loiterer, here —

For this a gleam of random joy,  
Hath flush'd my unaccustom'd cheek,  
And, with an o'er-charg'd bursting heart,  
I feel the thanks I cannot speak.

O ! sweet are all the Muses' lays,  
And sweet the charm of matin bird —  
'T was long, since these estranged ears  
The sweeter voice of friend had heard.

The voice hath spoke : the pleasant sounds  
In memory's ear, in after time  
Shall live, to sometimes rouse a tear,  
And sometimes prompt an honest rhyme.

For when the transient charm is fled,  
And when the little week is o'er,  
To cheerless, friendless solitude  
When I return, as heretofore —

Long, long, within my aching heart,  
The grateful sense shall cherish'd be ;  
I'll think less meanly of myself,  
That Lloyd will sometimes think on me.

1797.

O Col., would to God you were in London  
with us, or we two at Stowey with you all.  
Lloyd takes up his abode at the *Bull and Mouth*  
Inn, — the *Cat and Salutation* would have had a  
charm more forcible for me. “ *O noctes cœnæque*

*Deum!*” Anglice — Welsh rabbits, punch, and poesy.

Should you be induced to publish those very schoolboyish verses, print ’em as they will occur, if at all, in the *Monthly Magazine*; yet I should feel ashamed that to you I wrote nothing better. But they are too personal, and almost trifling and obscure withal. Some lines of mine to Cowper were in last *Monthly Magazine*; they have not body of thought enough to plead for the retaining of ’em.

My sister’s kind love to you all.

C. LAMB

## XXII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Begun Sunday, February 5, 1797.

Dated on address by mistake: January 5, 1797.]

*Sunday morning.* — You cannot surely mean to degrade the *Joan of Arc* into a pot girl. You are not going, I hope, to annex to that most splendid ornament of Southey’s poem all this cock and a bull story of Joan the publican’s daughter of Neufchâtel, with the lamentable episode of a waggoner, his wife, and six children; the texture will be most lamentably disproportionate. The first forty or fifty lines of these addenda are, no doubt, in their way, admirable, too; but many would prefer the *Joan* of Southey.

On mightiest deeds to brood  
Of shadowy vastness, such as made my heart



Throb fast ; anon I paused, and in a state  
Of half expectance listen'd to the wind ;

They wonder'd at me, who had known me once  
A cheerless careless damsel ;

The eye,  
That of the circling throng and of the visible world  
Unseeing, saw the shapes of holy phantasy ;

I see nothing in your description of the Maid  
equal to these. There is a fine originality cer-  
tainly in those lines —

For she had lived in this bad world  
As in a place of tombs,  
And touch'd not the pollutions of the dead ;

but your “fierce vivacity” is a faint copy of the  
“fierce and terrible benevolence” of Southey.  
Added to this, that it will look like rivalry in  
you, and extort a comparison with S.,— I think to  
your disadvantage. And the lines, consider'd in  
themselves as an addition to what you had before  
written (strains of a far higher mood), are but  
such as Madame Fancy loves in some of her  
more familiar moods, at such times as she has  
met Noll Goldsmith, and walk'd and talk'd with  
him, calling him old acquaintance. Southey cer-  
tainly has no pretensions to vie with you in the  
sublime of poetry ; but he tells a plain tale better  
than you. I will enumerate some woeful blem-  
ishes, some of 'em sad deviations from that sim-  
plicity which was your aim. “Hail'd who might

be near" (the canvas-coverture moving, by the by, is laughable); "a woman and six children" (by the way, — why not nine children, it would have been just half as pathetic again): "statues of sleep they seem'd." "Frost-mangled wretch:" "green putridity:" "hail'd him immortal" (rather ludicrous again): "voiced a sad and simple tale" (abominable!): "unprovender'd:" "such his tale:" "Ah! suffering to the height of what was suffer'd" (a most *insufferable line*): "amazements of affright:" "the hot sore brain attributes its own hues of ghastliness and torture" (what shocking confusion of ideas!) In these delineations of common and natural feelings, in the familiar walks of poetry, you seem to resemble Montauban dancing with Roubigné's tenants, "much of his native loftiness remained in the execution."

I was reading your *Religious Musings* the other day, and sincerely I think it the noblest poem in the language, next after the *Paradise Lost*; and even that was not made the vehicle of such grand truths. "There is one mind," &c., down to "Almighty's Throne," are without a rival in the whole compass of my poetical reading.

Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze  
Views all creation.

I wish I could have written those lines. I rejoice that I am able to relish them. The loftier walks of Pindus are your proper region. There you have no compeer in modern times. Leave

the lowlands, unenvied, in possession of such men as Cowper and Southey. Thus am I pouring balsam into the wounds I may have been inflicting on my poor friend's vanity. In your notice of Southey's new volume you omit to mention the most pleasing of all, the *Miniature* —

There were

Who form'd high hopes and flattering ones of thee,  
Young Robert.

Spirit of Spenser! — was the wanderer wrong?

Fairfax I have been in quest of a long time. Johnson in his *Life of Waller* gives a most delicious specimen of him, and adds, in the true manner of that delicate critic as well as amiable man, "it may be presumed that this old version will not be much read after the elegant translation of my friend, Mr. Hoole." I endeavour'd — I wish'd to gain some idea of Tasso from this Mr. Hoole, the great boast and ornament of the India House, but soon desisted. I found him more vapid than smallest small beer sun-vinegared. Your *Dream*, down to that exquisite line —

I can't tell half his adventures,

is a most happy resemblance of Chaucer. The remainder is so so. The best line, I think, is, —

He belong'd, I believe, to the witch Melancholy.

By the way, when will our volume come out? Don't delay it till you have written a new *Joan of Arc*. Send what letters you please by me, and in

any way you choose, single or double. The India Co. is better adapted to answer the cost than the generality of my friend's correspondents, — such poor and honest dogs as John Thelwall, particularly. I cannot say I know Colson, at least intimately. I once supped with him and Allen. I think his manners very pleasing. I will not tell you what I think of Lloyd, for he may by chance come to see this letter, and that thought puts a restraint on me. I cannot think what subject would suit your epic genius; some philosophical subject, I conjecture, in which shall be blended the sublime of poetry and of science. Your proposed *Hymns* will be a fit preparatory study wherewith “to discipline your young noviciate soul.” I grow dull; I'll go walk myself out of my dulness.

*Sunday night.* — You and Sara are very good to think so kindly and so favourably of poor Mary. I would to God all did so too. But I very much fear she must not think of coming home in my father's lifetime. It is very hard upon her. But our circumstances are peculiar, and we must submit to them. God be praised she is so well as she is. She bears her situation as one who has no right to complain. My poor old aunt, whom you have seen, the kindest, goodest creature to me when I was at school; who used to toddle there to bring me fag, when I, school-boy like, only despised her for it, and used to be ashamed to

see her come and sit herself down on the old coal-hole steps as you went into the old grammar school, and open her apron and bring out her bason, with some nice thing she had caused to be saved for me; the good old creature is now lying on her deathbed. I cannot bear to think on her deplorable state. To the shock she received on that our evil day, from which she never completely recovered, I impute her illness. She says, poor thing, she is glad she is come home to die with me. I was always her favourite:

No after friendship e'er can raise  
The endearments of our early days,  
Nor e'er the heart such fondness prove,  
As when it first began to love.

Lloyd has kindly left me for a keep-sake *John Woolman*. You have read it, he says, and like it. Will you excuse one short extract? I think it could not have escaped you: — “Small treasure to a resigned mind is sufficient. How happy is it to be content with a little, to live in humility, and feel that in us which breathes out this language, — Abba! Father!” I am almost ashamed to patch up a letter in this miscellaneous sort; but I please myself in the thought that anything from me will be acceptable to you. I am rather impatient, childishly so, to see our names affixed to the same common volume. Send me two, when it does come out; two will be enough, or indeed one, but two better. I have a dim recollection that, when in town, you were talking of the

origin of evil as a most prolific subject for a long poem. Why not adopt it, Coleridge? there would be room for imagination. Or the description (from a vision or dream, suppose) of an Utopia in one of the planets (the Moon, for instance). Or a *Five Days' Dream*, which shall illustrate, in sensible imagery, Hartley's five motives to conduct: — sensation,<sup>1</sup> imagination,<sup>2</sup> ambition,<sup>3</sup> sympathy,<sup>4</sup> theopathy.<sup>5</sup> 1st, banquets, music, &c., effeminacy, — and their insufficiency. 2d, "beds of hyacinth and roses, where young Adonis oft reposes;" "Fortunate Isles;" "The pagan Elysium," &c., &c.; poetical pictures; antiquity as pleasing to the fancy; — their emptiness, madness, etc. 3d, warriors, poets; some famous, yet more forgotten, their fame or oblivion now alike indifferent, pride, vanity, &c. 4th, all manner of pitiable stories, in Spenser-like verse, — love, friendship, relationship, &c. 5th, hermits, Christ and his apostles, martyrs, heaven, &c., &c. An imagination like yours, from these scanty hints, may expand into a thousand great ideas, if indeed you at all comprehend my scheme, which I scarce do myself.

*Monday morn.* — "A London letter. 9½." Look you, master poet, I have remorse as well as another man, and my bowels can sound upon occasion. But I must put you to this charge, for I cannot keep back my protest, however inef-



fectual, against the annexing your latter lines to those former, — this putting of new wine into old bottles. This my duty done, I will cease from writing till you invent some more reasonable mode of conveyance. Well may the “ragged followers of the nine” set up for floccinauci-what-do-you-call-’em-ists! And I do not wonder that in their splendid visions of Utopias in America they protest against the admission of those *yellow-complexioned*, *copper-color’d*, *white-liver’d* gentlemen, who never proved themselves *their* friends.

Don’t you think your verses on a *Young Ass* too trivial a companion for the *Religious Musings*? “Scoundrel monarch,” alter *that*; and the *Man of Ross* is scarce admissible as it now stands curtailed of its fairer half: reclaim its property from the *Chatterton*, which it does but encumber, and it will be a rich little poem. I hope you expunge great part of the old notes in the new edition. That, in particular, most barefaced, unfounded, impudent assertion that Mr. Rogers is indebted for his story to *Loch Lomond*, a poem by Bruce! I have read the latter. I scarce think you have. Scarce anything is common to them both. The poor author of the *Pleasures of Memory* was sorely hurt, Dyer says, by the accusation of unoriginality. He never saw the poem. I long to read your poem on Burns; I retain so indistinct a memory of it. In what shape and how does it come into public? As you leave off writ-

ing poetry till you finish your *Hymns*, I suppose you print now all you have got by you. You have scarce enough unprinted to make a second volume with Lloyd. Tell me all about it. What is become of Cowper? Lloyd told me of some verses on his mother. If you have them by you, pray send 'em me. I do so love him! Never mind their merit. May be *I* may like 'em — as your taste and mine do not always exactly *indentify* [identify]. Yours,

LAMB

NOTE

[This is the passage in *Religious Musings* that Lamb particularly praises :

There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,  
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.  
Truth of subliming import ! with the which  
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,  
He from his smaller particular orbit flies  
With blest outstarting ! From himself he flies,  
Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze  
Views all creation ; and he loves it all,  
And blesses it, and calls it very good !  
This is indeed to dwell with the Most High !  
Cherubs and rapture-trembling Seraphim  
Can press no nearer to the Almighty's throne.]

XXIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

February 13, 1797.

Your poem is altogether admirable, — parts of it are even exquisite, — in particular your personal account of the Maid far surpasses anything of the sort in Southey. I perceived all its excellences, on a first reading, as readily as now you have

been removing a supposed film from my eyes. I was only struck with [a] certain faulty disproportion in the matter and the *style*, which I still think I perceive, between these lines and the former ones. I had an end in view; I wished to make you reject the poem, only as being discordant with the other; and, in subservience to that end, it was politically done in me to overpass, and make no mention of merit which, could you think me capable of *overlooking*, might reasonably damn forever in your judgment all pretensions in me to be critical. There, I will be judged by Lloyd, whether I have not made a very handsome recantation.

I was in the case of a man whose friend has asked him his opinion of a certain young lady; the deluded wight gives judgment against her *in toto*,—don't like her face, her walk, her manners, — finds fault with her eyebrows, — can see no wit in her. His friend looks blank; he begins to smell a rat; wind veers about; he acknowledges her good sense, her judgment in dress, a certain simplicity of manners and honesty of heart, something too in her manners which gains upon you after a short acquaintance,—and then her accurate pronunciation of the French language and a pretty uncultivated taste in drawing. The reconciled gentleman smiles applause, squeezes him by the hand, and hopes he will do him the honour of taking a bit of dinner with Mrs. ——— and him — a plain family dinner —

some day next week. "For, I suppose, you never heard we were married! I'm glad to see you like my wife, however; you'll come and see her, ha?"

Now am I too proud to retract entirely. Yet I do perceive I am in some sort straitened; you are manifestly wedded to this poem, and what fancy has joined let no man separate. I turn me to the *Joan of Arc*, second book.

The solemn openings of it are with sounds which, Lloyd would say, "are silence to the mind." The deep preluding strains are fitted to initiate the mind, with a pleasing awe, into the sublimest mysteries of theory concerning man's nature and his noblest destination, — the philosophy of a first cause, of subordinate agents in creation superior to man, the subserviency of pagan worship and pagan faith to the introduction of a purer and more perfect religion, which you so elegantly describe as winning with gradual steps her difficult way northward from Bethabara. After all this cometh Joan, a *publican's* daughter, sitting on an ale-house *bench*, and marking the *swingings* of the *signboard*, finding a poor man, his wife and six children, starved to death with cold, and thence roused into a state of mind proper to receive visions emblematical of equality; which what the devil Joan had to do with, I don't know, or indeed with the French and American revolutions; though that needs no pardon, it is executed so nobly. After all, if you

perceive no disproportion, all argument is vain : I do not so much object to parts. Again, when you talk of building your fame on these lines in preference to the *Religious Musings*, I cannot help conceiving of you and of the author of that as two different persons, and I think you a very vain man.

I have been re-reading your letter. Much of it I *could* dispute; but with the latter part of it, in which you compare the two Joans with respect to their predispositions for fanaticism, I *toto corde* coincide; only I think that Southey's strength rather lies in the description of the emotions of the Maid under the weight of inspiration, — these (I see no mighty difference between *her* describing them or *you* describing them), these if you only equal, the previous admirers of his poem, as is natural, will prefer his; if you surpass, prejudice will scarcely allow it, and I scarce think you will surpass, though your specimen at the conclusion (I am in earnest) I think very nigh equals them. And in an account of a fanatic or of a prophet the description of her *emotions* is expected to be most highly finished. By the way, I spoke far too disparagingly of your lines, and, I am ashamed to say, purposely. I should like you to specify or particularise; the story of the *Tottering Eld*, of “his eventful years all come and gone,” is too general; why not make him a soldier, or some character, however, in which he has been wit-

ness to frequency of "cruel wrong and strange distress!" I think I should. When I laughed at the "miserable man crawling from beneath the coverture," I wonder I did not perceive it was a laugh of horror, — such as I have laughed at Dante's picture of the famished Ugolino. Without falsehood, I perceive an hundred beauties in your narrative. Yet I wonder you do not perceive something out-of-the-way, something unsimple and artificial, in the expression, "voiced a sad tale." I hate made-dishes at the muses' banquet. I believe I was wrong in most of my other objections. But surely "hailed him immortal," adds nothing to the terror of the man's death, which it was your business to heighten, not diminish by a phrase which takes away all terror from it. I like that line, "They closed their eyes in sleep, nor knew 't was death." Indeed, there is scarce a line I do not like. "*Turbid* ecstasy" is surely not so good as what you *had* written, "troublous." "Turbid" rather suits the muddy kind of inspiration which London porter confers. The versification is, throughout, to my ears unexceptionable, with no disparagement to the measure of the *Religious Musings*, which is exactly fitted to the thoughts.

You were building your house on a rock when you rested your fame on that poem. I can scarce bring myself to believe that I am admitted to a familiar correspondence, and all the license of friendship, with a man who writes blank verse



like Milton. Now, this is delicate flattery, *indirect* flattery. Go on with your *Maid of Orleans*, and be content to be second to yourself. I shall become a convert to it when 't is finished.

This afternoon I attend the funeral of my poor old aunt, who died on Thursday. I own I am thankful that the good creature has ended all her days of suffering and infirmity. She was to me the "cherisher of infancy," and one must fall on these occasions into reflections which it would be commonplace to enumerate, concerning death "of chance and change, and fate in human life." Good God, who could have foreseen all this but four months back! I had reckoned, in particular, on my aunt's living many years; she was a very hearty old woman. But she was a mere skeleton before she died, looked more like a corpse that had lain weeks in the grave than one fresh dead. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun; but let a man live many days and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many." Coleridge, why are we to live on after all the strength and beauty of existence are gone, when all the life of life is fled, as poor Burns expresses it?

Tell Lloyd I have had thoughts of turning Quaker, and have been reading, or am rather just beginning to read, a most capital book, good thoughts in good language, William Penn's *No Cross, no Crown*; I like it immensely. Unluckily I went to one of his meetings, tell him, in St. John

Street, yesterday, and saw a man under all the agitations and workings of a fanatic, who believed himself under the influence of some "inevitable presence." This cured me of Quakerism; I love it in the books of Penn and Woolman, but I detest the vanity of a man thinking he speaks by the Spirit, when what he says an ordinary man might say without all that quaking and trembling. In the midst of his inspiration — and the effects of it were most noisy — was handed into the midst of the meeting a most terrible blackguard Wapping sailor; the poor man, I believe, had rather have been in the hottest part of an engagement, for the congregation of broad-brims, together with the ravings of the prophet, were too much for his gravity, though I saw even he had delicacy enough not to laugh out. And the inspired gentleman, though his manner was so supernatural, yet neither talked nor professed to talk anything more than good sober sense, common morality, with now and then a declaration of not speaking from himself. Among other things, looking back to his childhood and early youth, he told the meeting what a graceless young dog he had been, that in his youth he had a good share of wit: reader, if thou hadst seen the gentleman, thou wouldst have sworn that it must indeed have been many years ago, for his rueful physiognomy would have scared away the playful goddess from the meeting, where he presided, for ever. A wit! a wit! what could he mean? Lloyd, it minded me of Falk-

land in the *Rivals*, "Am I full of wit and humour? No, indeed you are not. Am I the life and soul of every company I come into? No, it cannot be said you are." That hard-faced gentleman, a wit! Why, Nature wrote on his fanatic forehead fifty years ago, "Wit never comes, that comes to all." I should be as scandalised at a *bon mot* issuing from his oracle-looking mouth, as to see Cato go down a country-dance. God love you all. You are very good to submit to be pleased with reading my nothings. 'T is the privilege of friendship to talk nonsense, and to have her nonsense respected. — Yours ever,

C. LAMB

#### XXIV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

April 7, 1797.

Your last letter was dated the 10th February; in it you promised to write again the next day. At least, I did not expect so long, so unfriend-like, a silence. There was a time, Col., when a remissness of this sort in a dear friend would have lain very heavy on my mind, but latterly I have been too familiar with neglect to feel much from the semblance of it. Yet, to suspect one's self overlooked and in the way to oblivion, is a feeling rather humbling; perhaps, as tending to self-mortification, not unfavourable to the spiritual state. Still, as you meant to confer no benefit on the soul of your friend, you do not stand quite

clear from the imputation of unkindliness (a word by which I mean the diminutive of unkindness). Lloyd tells me he has been very ill, and was on the point of leaving you. I addressed a letter to him at Birmingham : perhaps he got it not, and is still with you. I hope his ill-health has not prevented his attending to a request I made in it, that he would write again very soon to let me know how he was. I hope to God poor Lloyd is not very bad, or in a very bad way. Pray satisfy me about these things. And then David Hartley was unwell ; and how is the small philosopher, the minute philosopher ? and David's mother ? Coleridge, I am not trifling, nor are these matter-of-fact questions only. You are all very dear and precious to me ; do what you will, Col., you may hurt me and vex me by your silence, but you cannot estrange my heart from you all. I cannot scatter friendships like chuck-farthings, nor let them drop from mine hand like hour-glass sand. I have two or three people in the world to whom I am more than indifferent, and I can't afford to whistle them off to the winds.

By the way, Lloyd may have told you about my sister. I told him. If not, I have taken her out of her confinement, and taken a room for her at Hackney, and spend my Sundays, holidays, &c., with her. She boards herself. In one little half year's illness, and in such an illness of such a nature and of such consequences ! to get her out into the world again, with a prospect of

her never being so ill again — this is to be ranked not among the common blessings of Providence. May that merciful God make tender my heart, and make me as thankful, as in my distress I was earnest, in my prayers. Congratulate me on an ever-present and never-alienable friend like her. And do, do insert, if you have not *lost*, my dedication. It will have lost half its value by coming so late. If you really are going on with that volume, I shall be enabled in a day or two to send you a short poem to insert. Now, do answer this. Friendship, and acts of friendship, should be reciprocal, and free as the air ; a friend should never be reduced to beg an alms of his fellow. Yet I will beg an alms ; I entreat you to write, and tell me all about poor Lloyd, and all of you. God love and preserve you all.

C. LAMB

## XXV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

April 15, 1797.

### A VISION OF REPENTANCE

I saw a famous fountain in my dream,  
Where shady pathways to a valley led ;  
A weeping willow lay upon that stream,  
And all around the fountain brink were spread  
Wide branching trees, with dark green leaf rich clad,  
Forming a doubtful twilight desolate and sad.

The place was such, that whoso enter'd in  
Disrobed was of every earthly thought,

And straight became as one that knew not sin,  
Or to the world's first innocence was brought ;  
Enseem'd it now, he stood on holy ground,  
In sweet and tender melancholy wrapt around.

A most strange calm stole o'er my soothed sprite ;  
Long time I stood, and longer had I staid,  
When lo ! I saw, saw by the sweet moonlight,  
Which came in silence o'er that silent shade,  
Where near the fountain SOMETHING like DESPAIR  
Made of that weeping willow garlands for her hair.

And eke with painful fingers she inwove  
Many an uncouth stem of savage thorn —  
“ The willow garland, *that* was for her Love,  
And *these* her bleeding temples would adorn.”  
With sighs her heart nigh burst — salt tears fast fell,  
As mournfully she bended o'er that sacred well.

To whom when I address myself to speak,  
She lifted up her eyes, and nothing said ;  
The delicate red came mantling o'er her cheek,  
And gathering up her loose attire, she fled  
To the dark covert of that woody shade  
And in her goings seem'd a timid gentle maid.

Revolving in my mind what this should mean,  
And why that lovely Lady plained so ;  
Perplex'd in thought at that mysterious scene,  
And doubting if 't were best to stay or go,  
I cast mine eyes in wistful gaze around,  
When from the shades came slow a small and plaintive sound :

“ PSYCHE am I, who love to dwell  
In these brown shades, this woody dell,  
Where never busy mortal came,  
Till now, to pry upon my shame.

“ At thy feet what thou dost see  
The Waters of Repentance be,



Which, night and day, I must augment  
With tears, like a true Penitent,  
If haply so my day of grace  
Be not yet past ; and this lone place,  
O'er-shadowy, dark, excludeth hence  
All thoughts but grief and penitence."

*"Why dost thou weep, thou gentle maid!  
And wherefore in this barren shade  
Thy hidden thoughts with sorrow feed?  
Can thing so fair repentance need?"*

"O ! I have done a deed of shame,  
And tainted is my virgin fame,  
And stain'd the beauteous maiden white  
In which my bridal robes were dight."

*"And who the promis'd spouse declare,  
And what those bridal garments were?"*

"Severe and saintly righteousness  
Compos'd the clear white bridal dress ;  
JESUS, the son of Heaven's high King  
Bought with his blood the marriage ring.

"A wretched sinful creature, I  
Deem'd lightly of that sacred tie,  
Gave to a treacherous WORLD my heart,  
And play'd the foolish wanton's part.

"Soon to these murky shades I came  
To hide from the Sun's light my shame ;  
And still I haunt this woody dell,  
And bathe me in that healing well,  
Whose waters clear have influence  
From sin's foul stains the soul to cleanse ;  
And night and day I them augment  
With tears, like a true Penitent,  
Until, due expiation made,  
And fit atonement fully paid,

The Lord and Bridegroom me present  
Where in sweet strains of high consent,  
God's throne before, the Seraphim  
Shall chaunt the ecstatic marriage hymn."

"*Now Christ restore thee soon,*" I said,  
And thenceforth all my dream was fled.

The above you will please to print immediately before the blank verse fragments. Tell me if you like it. I fear the latter half is unequal to the former, in parts of which I think you will discover a delicacy of pencilling not quite un-*Spenser-like*. The latter half aims at the *measure*, but has failed to attain the *poetry*, of Milton in his *Comus* and Fletcher in that exquisite thing ycleped the *Faithful Shepherdess*, where they both use eight-syllable lines. But this latter half was finished in great haste, and as a task, not from that impulse which affects the name of inspiration.

By the way, I have lit upon Fairfax's *Godfrey of Bullen* for half-a-crown. Rejoice with me.

Poor dear Lloyd! I had a letter from him yesterday; his state of mind is truly alarming. He has, by his own confession, kept a letter of mine unopened three weeks, afraid, he says, to open it, lest I should speak upbraidingly to him; and yet this very letter of mine was in answer to one, wherein he informed me that an alarming illness had alone prevented him from writing. You will pray with me, I know, for his recovery; for surely, Coleridge, an exquisiteness of feeling like this must border on derangement. But I love him

more and more, and will not give up the hope of his speedy recovery, as he tells me he is under Dr. Darwin's regimen.

God bless us all, and shield us from insanity, which is "the sorest malady of all."

My kind love to your wife and child.

C. LAMB

Pray write, now.

## XXVI. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Tuesday,] June 13, 1797.

I stared with wild wonderment to see thy well-known hand again. It revived many a pleasing recollection of an epistolary intercourse, of late strangely suspended, once the pride of my life. Before I even opened thy letter, I figured to myself a sort of complacency which my little hoard at home would feel at receiving the newcomer into the little drawer where I keep my treasures of this kind. You have done well in writing to me. The little room (was it not a little one?) at the *Salutation* was already in the way of becoming a fading idea! it had begun to be classed in my memory with those "wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid," in the recollection of which I feel I have no property. You press me, very kindly do you press me, to come to Stowey; obstacles, strong as death, prevent me at present; maybe I shall be able to come before the year is out; believe me, I will come as soon as I can, but I dread naming a prob-

able time. It depends on fifty things, besides the expense, which is not nothing. Lloyd wants me to come and see him; but, besides that you have a prior claim on me, I should not feel myself so much at home with him, till he gets a house of his own. As to Richardson, caprice may grant what caprice only refused, and it is no more hardship, rightly considered, to be dependent on him for pleasure, than to lie at the mercy of the rain and sunshine for the enjoyment of a holiday: in either case we are not to look for a suspension of the laws of nature. "Grill will be Grill." *Vide* Spenser.

I could not but smile at the compromise you make with me for printing Lloyd's poems first; but there are in nature, I fear, too many tendencies to envy and jealousy not to justify you in your apology. Yet, if any one is welcome to pre-eminence from me, it is Lloyd, for he would be the last to desire it. So pray, let his name *uniformly* precede mine, for it would be treating me like a child to suppose it could give me pain. Yet, alas! I am not insusceptible of the bad passions. Thank God, I have the ingenuousness to be ashamed of them. I am dearly fond of Charles Lloyd; he is all goodness, and I have too much of the world in my composition to feel myself thoroughly deserving of his friendship.

Lloyd tells me that Sheridan put you upon writing your tragedy. I hope you are only Coleridgeizing when you talk of finishing it in a few

days. Shakspeare was a more modest man ; but you best know your own power.

Of my last poem you speak slightly ; surely the longer stanzas were pretty tolerable ; at least there was one good line in it, —

Thick-shaded trees, with dark green leaf rich clad.

To adopt your own expression, I call this a “rich” line, a fine full line. And some others I thought even beautiful. Believe me, my little gentleman will feel some repugnance at riding behind in the basket ; though, I confess, in pretty good company. Your picture of idiocy, with the sugar-loaf head, is exquisite ; but are you not too severe upon our more favoured brethren in fatuity ? Lloyd tells me how ill your wife and child have been. I rejoice that they are better. My kindest remembrances and those of my sister. I send you a trifling letter ; but you have only to think that I have been skimming the superficies of my mind, and found it only froth. Now, do write again ; you cannot believe how I long and love always to hear about you. Yours, most affectionately,

CHARLES LAMB

*Monday Night.*

## XXVII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

June 24, 1797.

Did you seize the grand opportunity of seeing Kosciusko while he was at Bristol ? I never saw

a hero ; I wonder how they look. I have been reading a most curious romance-like work, called the *Life of John Bunce, Esq.* 'T is very interesting, and an extraordinary compound of all manner of subjects, from the depth of the ludicrous to the heights of sublime religious truth. There is much abstruse science in it above my cut and an infinite fund of pleasantry. John Bunce is a famous fine man, formed in Nature's most eccentric hour. I am ashamed of what I write. But I have no topic to talk of. I see nobody, and sit, and read or walk, alone, and hear nothing. I am quite lost to conversation from disuse ; and out of the sphere of my little family, who, I am thankful, are dearer and dearer to me every day, I see no face that brightens up at my approach. My friends are at a distance ; worldly hopes are at a low ebb with me, and unworldly thoughts are not yet familiarised to me, though I occasionally indulge in them. Still I feel a calm not unlike content. I fear it is sometimes more akin to physical stupidity than to a heaven-flowing serenity and peace. What right have I to obtrude all this upon you ? what is such a letter to you ? and if I come to Stowey, what conversation can I furnish to compensate my friend for those stores of knowledge and of fancy, those delightful treasures of wisdom, which I know he will open to me ? But it is better to give than to receive ; and I was a very patient hearer and docile scholar in our winter evening meetings at Mr. May's ;



was I not, Col. ? What I have owed to thee, my heart can ne'er forget.

God love you and yours.

C. L.

*Saturday.*

## XXVIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[End of June] 1797.

I discern a possibility of my paying you a visit next week. May I, can I, shall I, come so soon ? Have you *room* for me, *leisure* for me ? and are you all pretty well ? Tell me all this honestly — immediately.

And by what *day* coach could I come soonest and nearest to Stowey ? A few months hence may suit you better ; certainly me, as well. If so, say so. I long, I yearn, with all the longings of a child do I desire to see you, to come among you — to see the young philosopher, to thank Sara for her last year's invitation in person — to read your tragedy — to read over together our little book — to breathe fresh air — to revive in me vivid images of "*Salutation* scenery." There is a sort of sacrilege in my letting such ideas slip out of my mind and memory.

Still that Richardson remaineth — a thorn in the side of Hope, when she would lean towards Stowey.

Here I will leave off, for I dislike to fill up this paper, which involves a question so con-

nected with my heart and soul, with meaner matter, or subjects to me less interesting. I can talk, as I can think, nothing else.

C. LAMB

*Thursday.*

## XXIX.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[No date. Probably July 19 or 26, 1797.]

I am scarcely yet so reconciled to the loss of you, or so subsided into my wonted uniformity of feeling, as to sit calmly down to think of you and write to you. But I reason myself into the belief that those few and pleasant holidays shall not have been spent in vain. I feel improvement in the recollection of many a casual conversation. The names of Tom Poole, of Wordsworth and his good sister, with thine and Sara's, are become "familiar in my mouth as household words." You would make me very happy, if you think W. has no objection, by transcribing for me that inscription of his. I have some scattered sentences ever floating on my memory, teasing me that I cannot remember more of it. You may believe I will make no improper use of it. Believe me I can think now of many subjects on which I had planned gaining information from you; but I forgot my "treasure's worth" while I possessed it. Your leg is now become to me a matter of much more importance; and many a little thing, which when I was present with you

seemed scarce to *indent* my notice, now presses painfully on my remembrance.

Is the Patriot come yet? Are Wordsworth and his sister gone yet? I was looking out for John Thelwall all the way from Bridgewater, and had I met him, I think it would have moved almost me to tears. You will oblige me, too, by sending me my greatcoat, which I left behind in the oblivious state the mind is thrown into at parting; is it not ridiculous that I sometimes envy that greatcoat lingering so cunningly behind? — at present I have none — so send it me by a Stowey waggon, if there be such a thing, directing for C. L., No. 45 Chapel-Street, Pentonville, near London. But above all, *that Inscription!* it will recall to me the tones of all your voices, and with them many a remembered kindness to one who could and can repay you all only by the silence of a grateful heart. I could not talk much, while I was with you, but my silence was not sullenness, nor I hope from any bad motive; but, in truth, disuse has made me awkward at it. I know I behaved myself, particularly at Tom Poole's, and at Cruikshank's, most like a sulky child; but company and converse are strange to me. It was kind in you all to endure me as you did.

Are you and your dear Sara — to me also very dear, because very kind — agreed yet about the management of little Hartley? and how go on the little rogue's teeth? I will see White to-

morrow, and he shall send you information on that matter ; but as perhaps I can do it as well after talking with him, I will keep this letter open.

My love and thanks to you and all of you.

C. L.

*Wednesday Evening.*

#### NOTE

[Lamb spent a week at Nether Stowey in July, 1797. Coleridge tells Southey of this visit in a letter written in that month : " Charles Lamb has been with me for a week. He left me Friday morning. The second day after Wordsworth (who had just left Racedown, near Crewkerne, for Alfoxden, near Stowey) came to me, dear Sara accidentally emptied a skillet of boiling milk on my foot, which confined me during the whole time of C. Lamb's stay and still prevents me from all walks longer than a furlong." This is the cause of Lamb's allusion to Coleridge's leg, and it also produced Coleridge's poem, *This lime-tree bower my prison*, addressed to Lamb, which opens as follows, — the friends in the fourth line being Lamb, Wordsworth, and Dorothy Wordsworth. — E. V. LUCAS.]

Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,  
Lam'd by the scathe of fire, lonely and faint,  
This lime-tree bower my prison! They, meantime  
My Friends, whom I may never meet again,  
On springy heath, along the hill-top edge  
Wander delighted, and look down, perchance,  
On that same rifted Dell, where many an ash  
Twists its wild limbs beside the ferny rock  
Whose plummy ferns forever nod and drip,  
Spray'd by the waterfall. But chiefly thou  
My gentle-hearted *Charles!* thou who had pin'd  
And hunger'd after Nature many a year,  
In the great City pent, winning thy way  
With sad yet bowed soul, through evil and pain  
And strange calamity !

### XXX. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[P. M., August 24, 1797.]

Poor Charles Lloyd came to me about a fortnight ago. He took the opportunity of Mr. Hawkes coming to London, and I think at his request, to come with him. It seemed to me, and he acknowledged it, that he had come to gain a little time and a little peace, before he made up his mind. He was a good deal perplexed what to do, wishing earnestly that he had never entered into engagements which he felt himself unable to fulfil, but which on Sophia's account he could not bring himself to relinquish. I could give him little advice or comfort, and feeling my own inability painfully, eagerly snatched at a proposal he made me to go to Southey's with him for a day or two. He then meant to return with me, who could stay only one night. While there, he at one time thought of going to consult you, but changed his intention and stayed behind with Southey, and wrote an explicit letter to Sophia. I came away on the Tuesday, and on the Saturday following, *last Saturday*, receiv'd a letter dated Bath, in which he said he was on his way to Birmingham, that Southey was accompanying him, and that he went for the purpose of persuading Sophia to a Scotch marriage —

I greatly feared, that she would never consent to this, from what Lloyd had told me of her character. But waited most anxiously the result.

ch. Since then I have not had one letter. For God's sake, if you get any intelligence of or from Charles Lloyd, communicate it, for I am much alarmed.

C. LAMB

I wrote to Burnett what I write now to you,— was it from him you heard, or elsewhere? He said if he *had* come to you, he could never have brought himself to leave you. In all his distress he was sweetly and exemplarily calm and master of himself, and seemed perfectly free from his disorder.

do/ How do you all (at?)

XXXI. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

September 1797.

WRITTEN A TWELVEMONTH AFTER THE EVENTS<sup>1</sup>

[*Friday next, Coleridge, is the day on which my mother died.*]

Alas! how am I chang'd! Where be the tears,  
The sobs, and forc'd suspensions of the breath,  
And all the dull desertions of the heart,  
With which I hung o'er my dear mother's corse?  
Where be the blest subsidings of the storm  
Within, the sweet resignedness of hope  
Drawn heavenward, and strength of filial love,  
In which I bow'd me to my Father's will?  
My God, and my Redeemer! keep not thou  
My heart in brute and sensual thanklessness  
Seal'd up; oblivious ever of that dear grace,  
And health restor'd to my long-loved Friend,  
Long-lov'd, and worthy known. Thou didst not keep

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.



Her soul in death ! O keep not now, my Lord,  
Thy servants in far worse, in spiritual death,  
And darkness blacker than those feared shadows  
O' the valley all must tread. Lend us thy balms,  
Thou dear Physician of the sin-sick soul,  
And heal our cleansed bosoms of the wounds  
With which the world hath pierc'd us thro' and thro' !  
Give us new flesh, new birth. Elect of heav'n  
May we become ; in thine Election sure  
Contain'd, and to one purpose stedfast drawn,  
Our soul's salvation !

Thou and I, dear friend,  
With filial recognition sweet, shall know  
One day the face of our dear mother in heaven,  
And her remember'd looks of love shall greet  
With answering looks of love ; her placid smiles  
Meet with a smile as placid, and her hand  
With drops of fondness wet, nor fear repulse.  
Be witness for me, Lord, I do not ask  
Those days of vanity to return again,  
(Nor fitting me to ask, nor thee to give.)  
Vain loves and "wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid,"  
(Child of the dust as I am,) who so long  
My foolish heart steep'd in Idolatry  
And creature-loves. Forgive it, oh my Maker,  
If, in a mood of grief, I sin almost  
In sometimes brooding on the days long past,  
(And from the grave of time wishing them back,)  
Days of a mother's fondness to her child,  
Her little one. Oh where be now those sports,  
And infant play-games ? where the joyous troops  
Of children, and the haunts I did so love ?  
O my companions, O ye loved names  
Of friend, or playmate dear ; gone are ye now.  
Gone divers ways ; to honour and credit some ;  
And some, I fear, to ignominy and shame.  
I only am left, with unavailing grief  
One parent dead to mourn, and see one live  
Of all life's joys bereft and desolate : —

Am left with a few friends, and one, above  
The rest, found faithful in a length of years,  
Contented as I may, to bear me on  
To the not unpeaceful evening of a day  
Made black by morning storms !

The following I wrote when I had returned  
from [Charles] Lloyd, leaving him behind at  
Burton, with Southey. To understand some of  
it, you must remember that at that time he was  
very much perplexed in mind.

A stranger and alone I past those scenes  
We past so late together ; and my heart  
Felt something like desertion, as I look'd  
Around me, and the pleasant voice of friend  
Was absent, and the cordial look was there  
No more to smile on me. I thought on Lloyd —  
All he had been to me ! And now I go  
Again to mingle with a world impure ?  
With men who make a mock of holy things,  
Mistaken, and of man's best hope think scorn.  
The world does much to warp the heart of man ;  
And I may sometimes join its ideot [idiot] laugh :  
Of this I now complain not. Deal with me,  
Omniscient Father, as thou judgest best,  
And in *thy* season, soften thou my heart —  
I pray not for myself. I pray for him  
Whose soul is sore perplex'd. Shine thou on him,  
Father of lights ! and in the difficult paths  
Make plain his way before him : his own thoughts  
May he not think, his own ends not pursue ;  
So shall he best perform thy will on earth.  
GREATEST AND BEST, thy will be ever ours !

The former of these poems I wrote with unusual celerity t'other morning at office. I expect you to like it better than anything of mine ; Lloyd does, and I do myself.

You use Lloyd very ill, never writing to him. I tell you again that his is not a mind with which you should play tricks. He deserves more tenderness from you.

For myself, I must spoil a little passage of Beaumont and Fletcher to adapt it to my feelings, —

I am Prouder

That I was once your friend, tho' now forgot,  
Than to have had another true to me.

If you don't write to me now, as I told Lloyd, I shall get angry, and call you hard names — Manchineel, and I don't know what else. I wish you would send me my greatcoat. The snow and the rain season is at hand, and I have but a wretched old coat, once my father's, to keep 'em off, and that is transitory.

“When time drives flocks from field to fold,  
When ways grow foul and blood gets cold,”

I shall remember where I left my coat. Meet emblem wilt thou be, old Winter, of a friend's neglect — cold, cold, cold! Remembrance where remembrance is due.

C. LAMB

### XXXII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

January 28, 1798.

You have writ me many kind letters, and I have answered none of them. I don't deserve your attentions. An unnatural indifference has

been creeping on me since my last misfortunes, or I should have seized the first opening of a correspondence with *you*. To you I owe much, under God. In my brief acquaintance with you in London, your conversations won me to the better cause, and rescued me from the polluting spirit of the world. I might have been a worthless character without you ; as it is, I do possess a certain improvable portion of devotional feelings, tho' when I view myself in the light of divine truth, and not according to the common measures of human judgment, I am altogether corrupt and sinful. This is no cant. I am very sincere.

These last afflictions, Coleridge, have failed to soften and bend my will. They found me unprepared. My former calamities produced in me a spirit of humility and a spirit of prayer. I thought they had sufficiently disciplined me ; but the event ought to humble me. If God's judgments now fail to take away from me the heart of stone, what more grievous trials ought I not to expect ? I have been very querulous, impatient under the rod — full of little jealousies and heart-burnings. I had wellnigh quarrelled with Charles Lloyd ; and for no other reason, I believe, than that the good creature did all he could to make me happy. The truth is, I thought he tried to force my mind from its natural and proper bent. He continually wished me to be from home ; he was drawing me *from* the

consideration of my poor dear Mary's situation, rather than assisting me to gain a proper view of it with religious consolations. I wanted to be left to the tendency of my own mind, in a solitary state, which, in times past, I knew had led to quietness and a patient bearing of the yoke. He was hurt that I was not more constantly with him ; but he was living with White, a man to whom I had never been accustomed to impart my *dearest feelings*, tho' from long habits of friendliness, and many a social and good quality, I loved him very much. I met company there sometimes — indiscriminate company. Any society almost, when I am in affliction, is sorely painful to me. I seem to breathe more freely, to think more collectedly, to feel more properly and calmly, when alone. All these things the good creature did with the kindest intentions in the world, but they produced in me nothing but soreness and discontent. I became, as he complained, "jaundiced" towards him ; but he has forgiven me ; and his smile, I hope, will draw all such humours from me.

I am recovering, God be praised for it, a healthiness of mind, something like calmness ; but I want more religion. I am jealous of human helps and leaning-places. I rejoice in your good fortunes. May God at the last settle you ! — You have had many and painful trials ; humanly speaking they are going to end ; but we should rather pray that discipline may attend



us thro' the whole of our lives. A careless and a dissolute spirit has advanced upon *me* with large strides. Pray God that my present afflictions may be sanctified to me! Mary is recovering; but I see no opening yet of a situation for her. Your invitation went to my very heart; but you have a power of exciting interest, of leading all hearts



Schools of Germany, whither I am told you are departing, to the utter dissatisfaction of your native Devonshire and regret of universal England ; but to my own individual consolation if thro' the channel of your wished return, learned Sir, my friend, may be transmitted to this our island, from those famous theological wits of Leipsic and Göttingen, any rays of illumination, in vain to be derived from the home growth of our English Halls and Colleges. Finally, wishing, learned Sir, that you may see Schiller and swing in a wood (*vide* Poems) and sit upon a tun, and eat fat hams of Westphalia,

I remain,  
Your friend and docile pupil to instruct,  
CHARLES LAMB

NOTE — BY E. V. LUCAS

[Lamb's last letter to Coleridge for two years. See note to Letter XXXV.

Lamb's reading of Thomas Aquinas probably was at the base of his theses. William Godwin, in his "History of Knowledge, Learning and Taste in Great Britain," which had run through some years of the *New Annual Register*, cited, in 1786, a number of the more grotesque queries of the old Schoolmen. Mr. Kegan Paul suggests that Lamb went to Godwin for his examination paper; but I should think this very unlikely. Some of the questions hit Coleridge very hard.

This letter was first printed by Joseph Cottle in his *Early Recollections*, 1837, with the remark: "Mr. Coleridge gave me this letter, saying, 'These young visionaries will do each other no good.'" It marks an epoch in Lamb's life, since it brought about, or, at any rate, clinched, the only quarrel that ever subsisted between Coleridge and himself.

The story is told in *Charles Lamb and the Lloyds*. Briefly, Lloyd had left Coleridge in the spring of 1797; a little later, in a state of much perplexity, he had carried his troubles to Lamb, and to Southey, between whom and Coleridge no very cordial feeling had existed for some time, rather than to Coleridge himself, his late mentor. That probably fanned the flame. The next move came from Coleridge. He printed in the *Monthly Magazine* for November, 1797, three sonnets signed Nehemiah Higginbottom, burlesquing instances of "affectation of unaffectedness," and "puny pathos" in the poems of himself, of Lamb, and of Lloyd, the humour of which Lamb probably did not much appreciate, since he believed in the feelings expressed in his verse, while Lloyd was certainly unfitted to esteem it. Coleridge effected even more than he had contemplated, for Southey took the sonnet upon Simplicity as an attack upon himself, which did not, however, prevent him, a little later, from a similar exercise in ponderous humour under the too similar name of Abel Shufflebottom.

In March, 1798, when a new edition of Coleridge's 1797 *Poems* was in contemplation, Lloyd wrote to Cottle, the publisher, asking that he would persuade Coleridge to omit his (Lloyd's) portion, a request which Coleridge probably resented, but which gave him the opportunity of replying that no persuasion was needed for the omission of verses published at the earnest request of the author.

Meanwhile a worse offence than all against Coleridge was perpetrated by Lloyd. In the spring of 1798 was published at Bristol his novel, *Edmund Oliver*, dedicated to Lamb, in which Coleridge's experiences in the army, under the *alias* of Silas Tomkyn Comberback, in 1793-1794, and certain of Coleridge's peculiarities, including his drug habit, were utilised. Added to this, Lloyd seems to have repeated both to Lamb and Southey, in distorted form, certain things which Coleridge had said of them, either in confidence, or, at any rate, with no wish that they should be repeated; with the result that Lamb actually went so far as to take sides with Lloyd against his older friend. The following extracts from a letter from Coleridge to Lamb, which I am permitted by Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge to print, carry the story a little farther:

[Spring of 1798.]

DEAR LAMB, — Lloyd has informed me through Miss Wordsworth that you intend no longer to correspond with me. This has given me little pain; not that I do not love and esteem you, but on the contrary because I am confident that your intentions are pure. You are performing what you deem a duty, and humanly speaking, have that merit which can be derived from the performance of a painful duty. Painful, for you would not without struggles abandon me in behalf of a man [Lloyd] who, wholly ignorant of all but your name, became attached to you in consequence of my attachment, caught *his* from *my* enthusiasm, and learned to love you at my fireside, when often while I have been sitting and talking of your sorrows and afflictions I have stopped my conversations and lifted up wet eyes and prayed for you. No! I am confident that although you do not think as a wise man, you feel as a good man.

From you I have received little pain, because for you I suffer little alarm. I cannot say this for your friend; it appears to me evident that his feelings are vitiated, and that his ideas are in their combination merely the creatures of those feelings. I have received letters from him, and the best and kindest wish which, as a Christian, I can offer in return is that he may feel remorse. . . .

When I wrote to you that my Sonnet to Simplicity was not composed with reference to Southey, you answered me (I believe these were the words): "It was a lie too gross for the grossest ignorance to believe;" and I was not angry with you, because the assertion which the grossest ignorance would believe a lie the Omniscient knew to be truth. This, however, makes me cautious not too hastily to affirm the falsehood of an assertion of Lloyd's that in Edmund Oliver's love-fit, leaving college, and going into the army, he had no sort of allusion to or recollection of my love-fit, leaving college, and going into the army, and that he never thought of my person in the description of Oliver's person in the first letter of the second volume. This cannot appear stranger to me than my assertion did to you, and therefore I will suspend my absolute faith. . . .

I have been unfortunate in my connections. Both you and

Lloyd became acquainted with me when your minds were far from being in a composed or natural state, and you clothed my image with a suit of notions and feelings which could belong to nothing human. You are restored to comparative sanity, and are merely wondering what is become of the Coleridge with whom you were so passionately in love; *Charles Lloyd's* mind has only changed his disease, and he is now arraying his ci-devant Angel in a flaming San Benito — the whole ground of the garment a dark brimstone and plenty of little devils flourished out in black. Oh, me! Lamb, “even in laughter the heart is sad!” . . .

God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE

Here follows Lamb's first letter to Robert Lloyd. Lamb's first letter is one of advice, apparently in reply to some complaints of his position addressed to him by Lloyd. A second and longer letter which, though belonging to August, 1798, may be mentioned here, also counsels, commending the use of patience and humility. Lamb is here seen in the character of a spiritual adviser. The letter is unique in his correspondence.

Robert Lloyd was a younger brother of Charles Lloyd, and Lamb had probably met him when on his visit to Birmingham in the summer. The boy, then not quite twenty, was apprenticed to a Quaker draper at Saffron Walden in Essex.]

#### XXXIV.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

[? July, 1798.]

My dear Robert, — I am a good deal occupied with a calamity near home, but not so much as to prevent my thinking about you with the warmest affection. You are among my very dearest friends. I know you will feel deeply, when you hear that my poor sister is unwell again, — one of her old disorders; but I trust it will hold no longer than her former illnesses have done. Do

not imagine, Robert, that I sink under this misfortune, —I have been season'd to such events, and think I could bear anything tolerably well. My own health is left me, and my good spirits, and I have some duties to perform — these duties shall be *my object*.

I wish, Robert, *you* could find an object—I know the painfulness of vacuity, all its achings and inexplicable longings. I wish to God I could recommend any plan to you. Stock your mind well with religious knowledge; discipline it to wait with patience for duties, that may be your lot in life; prepare yourself not to expect too much out of yourself; *read and think* — This is all commonplace advice, I know — I know too, that it is easy to give advice, which in like circumstances we might not follow ourselves. You must depend upon yourself—there will come a time, when you will wonder you were not more content—I know you will excuse my saying any more, —

Be assur'd of my kindest warmest  
affection—C. LAMB

### XXXV. — TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

Saturday, July 28, 1798.

I am ashamed that I have not thanked you before this for the *Joan of Arc*, but I did not know your address, and it did not occur to me to write through Cottle. The poem delighted me, and

the notes amused me, but methinks she of Neufchâtel, in the print, holds her sword too "like a dancer."

I sent your *notice* to Phillips, particularly requesting an immediate insertion, but I suppose it came too late.

I am sometimes curious to know what progress you make in that same *Calendar*: whether you insert the nine worthies and Whittington? what you do or how you can manage when two saints meet and quarrel for precedence? Martlemas, and Candlemas, and Christmas, are glorious themes for a writer like you, antiquity-bitten, smit with the love of boars' heads and rosemary; but how you can ennoble the 1st of April I know not.

By the way I had a thing to say, but a certain false modesty has hitherto prevented me: perhaps I can best communicate my wish by a hint, — my birthday is on the 10th of February, New Style; but if it interferes with any remarkable event, why rather than my country should lose her fame, I care not if I put my nativity back eleven days. Fine family patronage for your *Calendar*, if that old lady of prolific memory were living, who lies (or lyes) in some church in London (saints forgive me, but I have forgot *what* church), attesting that enormous legend of as many children as days in the year. I marvel her impudence did not grasp at a leap-year. Three hundred and sixty-five dedications, and all in a



family: you might spit in spirit on the oneness of Mæcnas' patronage!

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, to the eternal regret of his native Devonshire, emigrates to Westphalia. "Poor Lamb (these were his last words), if he wants any *knowledge*, he may apply to me," — in ordinary cases, I thanked him, I have an *Encyclopædia* at hand, but on such an occasion as going over to a German university, I could not refrain from sending him the following propositions, to be by him defended or oppugned (or both) at Leipsic or Göttingen.

[These queries are found in Letter xxxiii, and need not be repeated here.]

Samuel Taylor C. hath not deigned an answer; was it impertinent of me to avail myself of that offered source of knowledge?

Lloyd is returned to town from Ipswich where he has been with his brother. He has brought home three acts of a play which I have not yet read. The scene for the most part laid in a brothel. O tempora, O mores! but as friend Coleridge said when he was talking bawdy to Miss —, "to the pure all things are pure."

Wishing *Madoc* may be born into the world with as splendid promise as the second birth or purification of the Maid of Neufchâtel, — I remain yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

I hope Edith is better; my kindest remem-

brances to her. You have a good deal of trifling to forgive in this letter.

#### NOTE

[This is Lamb's first letter to Southey that has been preserved. Probably others came before it. Southey now becomes Lamb's chief correspondent for some months. In Canon Ainger's transcript the letter ends with "Love and remembrances to Cottle."]

### XXXVI. — TO ROBERT LLOYD<sup>1</sup>

August, 1798.

My dear Robert,—Mary is better, and I trust that she will yet be restored to me. I am in good spirits, so do not be anxious about me:—I hope you get reconciled to your situation. The worst in it is that you have no *friend* to talk to; but wait in patience, and you will in good time make friends. The having a friend is not indispensably necessary to virtue or happiness. Religion removes those barriers of sentiment which partition us from the disinterested love of our brethren—we are commanded to love our enemies, to do good to those that hate us. How much more is it our duty then to cultivate a forbearance and complaisance towards those who only differ from us in dispositions and ways of thinking. There is always, without very unusual care there must always be, something of *self* in

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.

friendship: we love our friend because he is like ourselves. Can consequences altogether unmix'd and pure be reasonably expected from such a source — do not even the publicans and sinners the same? — Say, that you love a friend for his moral qualities, — is it not rather because those qualities resemble what you fancy your own? — this then is not without danger. — The only true cement of a valuable friendship, the only thing that even makes it not sinful, is when two friends propose to become mutually of benefit to each other in a moral or religious way. But even this friendship is perpetually liable to the mixture of something not pure — we love our friend, because he is *ours*: so we do our money, our wit, our knowledge, our virtue. And wherever this sense of *appropriation and property* enters, so much is to be subtracted from the value of that friendship or that virtue. Our duties are to do good expecting nothing again, to bear with contrary dispositions, to be candid and forgiving, not to crave and long after a communication of sentiment and feeling, but rather to avoid dwelling upon those feelings, however good, because they are our own. A man may be intemperate and selfish, who indulges in *good feelings*, for the mere pleasure they give him. I do not wish to deter you from making a friend, a true friend, and such a friendship where the parties are not blind to each other's faults, is very useful and valuable. I perceive a tendency in you to this

error, Robert. I know you have chosen to take up an high opinion of my moral worth. But I say it before God, and I do not lie, you are mistaken in me. I could not bear to lay open all my failings to you, for the sentiment of shame would be too pungent. Let this be as an example to you. —

Robert, friends fall off, friends mistake us, they change, they grow unlike us, they go away, they die; but God is everlasting and uncapable of change, and to Him we may look with chearful, unpresumptuous hope, while we discharge the duties of life in situations more untowardly than yours. You complain of the impossibility of improving yourself, but be assur'd that the opportunity of improvement lies more in the mind than the situation. Humble yourself before God, cast out the selfish principle, wait in patience, do good in every way you can to all sorts of people, never be easy to neglect a duty tho' a small one, praise God for all, and see His hand in all things, and He will in time raise you up *many friends* — or be Himself instead an unchanging Friend. — God bless you.

C. LAMB

XXXVII. — TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

October 18, 1798.

Dear Southey, — I have at last been so fortunate as to pick up Wither's *Emblems* for you, that

“old book and quaint,” as the brief author of *Rosamund Gray* hath it; it is in a most detestable state of preservation, and the cuts are of a fainter impression than I have seen. Some child, the curse of antiquaries and bane of bibliopolical rarities, hath been dabbling in some of them with its paint and dirty fingers, and in particular hath a little sullied the author’s own portraiture, which I think valuable, as the poem that accompanies it is no common one; this last excepted, the *Emblems* are far inferior to old Quarles. I once told you otherwise, but I had not then read old Q. with attention. I have picked up, too, another copy of Quarles for ninepence!!! *O tempora! O lectores!*—so that if you have lost or parted with your own copy, say so, and I can furnish you, for you prize these things more than I do. You will be amused, I think, with honest Wither’s “supersedeas to all them whose custom it is, without any deserving, to importune authors to give unto them their books.” I am sorry ’t is imperfect, as the lottery board annexed to it also is. Methinks you might modernise and elegantise this supersedeas, and place it in front of your *Joan of Arc*, as a gentle hint to Messrs. Park, &c. One of the happiest emblems and comical-est cuts is the owl and little chirpers, page 63.

Wishing you all amusement, which your true emblem-fancier can scarce fail to find in even bad emblems, I remain your caterer to command,

C. LAMB

Love and respects to Edith. I hope she is well. How does your Calendar prosper?

XXXVIII.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

[October 29, 1798.]

Dear Southey, — I thank you heartily for the eclogue; it pleases me mightily, being so full of picture-work and circumstances. I find no fault in it, unless perhaps that Joanna's ruin is a catastrophe too trite: and this is not the first or second time you have clothed your indignation, in verse, in a tale of ruined innocence. The old lady, spinning in the sun, I hope would not disdain to claim some kindred with old Margaret. I could almost wish you to vary some circumstances in the conclusion. A gentleman seducer has so often been described in prose and verse; what if you had accomplished Joanna's ruin by the clumsy arts and rustic gifts of some country-fellow? I am thinking, I believe, of the song,—

“An old woman clothed in grey,  
Whose daughter was charming and young,  
And she was deluded away  
By Roger's false flattering tongue.”

A Roger-Lothario would be a novel character: I think you might paint him very well. You may think this a very silly suggestion, and so, indeed, it is; but, in good truth, nothing else but the first words of that foolish ballad put me upon scribbling my *Rosamund*. But I thank you



heartily for the poem. Not having anything of my own to send you in return, — though, to tell truth, I am at work upon something, which if I were to cut away and garble, perhaps I might send you an extract or two that might not displease you; but I will not do that; and whether it will come to anything, I know not, for I am as slow as a Fleming painter when I compose anything. I will crave leave to put down a few lines of old Christopher Marlow's; I take them from his tragedy, *The Jew of Malta*. The Jew is a famous character, quite out of nature; but, when we consider the terrible idea our simple ancestors had of a Jew, not more to be discommended for a certain discolouring (I think Addison calls it) than the witches and fairies of Marlow's mighty successor. The scene is betwixt Barabas, the Jew, and Ithamore, a Turkish captive exposed to sale for a slave.

#### BARABAS

(*A precious rascal*)

As for myself, I walk abroad a-nights,  
And kill sick people groaning under walls :  
Sometimes I go about, and poison wells ;  
And now and then, to cherish Christian thieves,  
I am content to lose some of my crowns,  
That I may, walking in my gallery,  
See 'm go pinioned along by my door.  
Being young, I studied physic, and began  
To practise first upon the Italian :  
There I enriched the priests with burials,

And always kept the sexton's arms in ure  
 With digging graves and ringing dead men's knells ;  
 And, after that, was I an engineer,  
 And in the wars 'twixt France and Germany,  
 Under pretence of serving [helping] Charles the Fifth,  
 Slew friend and enemy with my stratagems.  
 Then after that was I an usurer,  
 And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,  
 And tricks belonging unto brokery,  
 I fill'd the jails with bankrupts in a year,  
 And with young orphans planted hospitals,  
 And every moon made some or other mad ;  
 And now and then one hang'd himself for grief,  
 Pinning upon his breast a long great scroll,  
 How I with interest tormented him.

Now hear Ithamore, the other gentle nature,  
 explain how he spent his time, —

#### ITHAMORE

*(A comical dog)*

Faith, master, in setting Christian villages on fire,  
 Chaining of eunuchs, binding galley-slaves.  
 One time I was an hostler at an inn,  
 And in the night-time secretly would I steal  
 To travellers' chambers, and there cut their throats.  
 Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneel'd,  
 I strowed powder on the marble stones,  
 And therewithal their knees would rankle so,  
 That I have laugh'd a-good to see the cripples  
 Go limping home to Christendom on stilts.

#### BARABAS

Why, this is something . . .

There is a mixture of the ludicrous and the  
 terrible in these lines, brimful of genius and an-

tique invention, that at first reminded me of your old description of cruelty in hell, which was in the true Hogarthian style. I need not tell *you* that Marlow was author of that pretty madrigal, "Come live with me, and be my love," and of the tragedy of "Edward II," in which are certain lines unequalled in our English tongue. Honest Walton mentions the said madrigal under the denomination of "certain smooth verses made long since by Kit Marlow."

I am glad you have put me on the scent after old Quarles. If I do not put up those eclogues, and that shortly, say I am no true-nosed hound. I have had a letter from Lloyd; the young metaphysician of Caius is well, and is busy recanting the new heresy, metaphysics, for the old dogma, Greek. My sister, I thank you, is quite well. She had a slight attack the other day, which frightened me a good deal; but it went off unaccountably. Love and respects to Edith.

Yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

### XXXIX.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

November 3, 1798.

I have read your Eclogue repeatedly, and cannot call it bald, or without interest; the cast of it and the design are completely original, and may set people upon thinking. It is as poetical

as the subject requires, which asks no poetry; but it is defective in pathos. The woman's own story is the tamest part of it; I should like you to remould that: it too much resembles the young maid's history; both had been in service. Even the omission would not injure the poem: after the words "growing wants," you might, not unconnectedly, introduce "look at that little chub" down to "welcome one." And, decidedly, I would have you end it somehow thus, —

Give them at least this evening good meal.

[*Gives her money.*]

Now, fare thee well; hereafter you have taught me  
To give sad meaning to the village bells, &c.

which would leave a stronger impression (as well as more pleasingly recall the beginning of the Eclogue) than the present commonplace reference to a better world, which the woman "must have heard at church." I should like you too a good deal to enlarge the most striking part, as it might have been, of the poem — "Is it idleness?" &c.: that affords a good field for dwelling on sickness, and inabilities, and old age. And you might also a good deal enrich the piece with a picture of a country wedding. The woman might very well, in a transient fit of oblivion, dwell upon the ceremony and circumstances of her own nuptials six years ago; the smugness of the bridegroom, the feastings, the cheap merriment, the welcomings, and the secret

envyings of the maidens; then dropping all this, recur to her present lot.

I do not know that I can suggest anything else, or that I have suggested anything new or material. I do not much prefer this Eclogue to the last. Both are inferior to the former.

And when he came to shake me by the hand,  
And spake as kindly to me as he used,  
I hardly knew his voice —

is the only passage that affected me. When servants speak their language ought to be plain, and not much raised above the common, else I should find fault with the bathos of this passage, —

And when I heard the bell strike out,  
I thought (what ?) that I had never heard it toll  
So dismally before.

I like the destruction of the martens' old nests hugely, having just such a circumstance in my memory. I shall be very glad to see your remaining Eclogue, if not too much trouble, as you give me reason to expect it will be the second best. I shall be very glad to see some more poetry, though, I fear, your trouble in transcribing will be greater than the service my remarks may do them.

Yours affectionately,

C. LAMB

I cut my letter short because I am called off to business.

## XL.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

November 8, 1798.

I perfectly accord with your opinion of old Wither. Quarles is a wittier writer, but Wither lays more hold of the heart. Quarles thinks of his audience when he lectures; Wither soliloquises in company with a full heart. What wretched stuff are the *Divine Fancies* of Quarles! Religion appears to him no longer valuable than it furnishes matter for quibbles and riddles; he turns God's grace into wantonness. Wither is like an old friend, whose warm-heartedness and estimable qualities make us wish he possessed more genius, but at the same time make us willing to dispense with that want. I always love Wither, and sometimes admire Quarles. Still that portrait poem is a fine one; and the extract from *The Shepherds' Hunting* places him in a starry height far above Quarles. If you wrote that review in the *Critical Review*, I am sorry you are so sparing of praise to the *Ancient Marinere*; so far from calling it, as you do, with some wit, but more severity, "A Dutch Attempt," &c., I call it a right English attempt, and a successful one, to dethrone German sublimity. You have selected a passage fertile in unmeaning miracles, but have passed by fifty passages as miraculous as the miracles they celebrate. I never so deeply felt the pathetic as in that part, —



“ A spring of love gush'd from my heart,  
And I bless'd them unaware ” —

It stung me into high pleasure through sufferings. Lloyd does not like it; his head is too metaphysical, and your taste too correct; at least I must allege something against you both, to excuse my own dotage, —

“ So lonely 't was, that God himself  
Scarce seemèd there to be ! ” &c., &c.

But you allow some elaborate beauties: you should have extracted 'em. *The Ancient Marinere* plays more tricks with the mind than that last poem, which is yet one of the finest written. But I am getting too dogmatical; and before I degenerate into abuse, I will conclude with assuring you that I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. LAMB

I am going to meet Lloyd at Ware on Saturday, to return on Sunday. Have you any commands or commendations to the metaphysician? I shall be very happy if you will dine or spend any time with me in your way through the great ugly city; but I know you have other ties upon you in these parts.

Love and respects to Edith, and friendly remembrances to Cottle.

## XLI. — TO ROBERT LLOYD<sup>1</sup>

London, November 13, 1798.

Now 't is Robert's turn. —

My dear Robert, — One passage in your Letter a little displeas'd me. The rest was nothing but kindness, which Robert's letters are ever brimful of. You say that "this world to you seems drain'd of all its sweets!" — At first I had hoped you only meant to insinuate the high price of Sugar! but I am afraid you meant more. O Robert, I don't know what you call sweet. Honey and the honeycomb, roses and violets, are yet in the earth. The sun and moon yet reign in Heaven, and the lesser lights keep up their pretty twinklings. Meats and drinks, sweet sights and sweet smells, a country walk, spring and autumn, follies and repentance, quarrels and reconcilements, have all a sweetness by turns — good humour and good nature, friends at home that love you, and friends abroad that miss you — you possess all these things, and more innumerable: and these are all sweet things. You may extract honey from everything; do not go a gathering after gall. The Bees are wiser in their generation than the race of sonnet writers and complainers: Bowleses and Charlotte Smiths, and all that tribe, who can see no joys, but what are past, and fill people's heads with notions of the un-

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.

satisfying nature of earthly comforts. I assure you I find this world a very pretty place. My kind love to all your sisters and to Thomas — he never writes to me — and tell Susanna I forgive her.

C. LAMB

## XLII.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

November 20, 1798.

As the little copy of verses I sent gave Priscilla and Robert some pleasure, I now send them another little tale, which is all I can send, for my stock will be exhausted.

'T is a tale of witchcraft, told by an old Steward in the family to Margaret, the ward of Sir Walter Woodvil. *Who* Sir Walter is, you may come to know bye and bye, when I have finished a Poem, from which this and the other are extracts, and all the extracts I can make without mutilating. [See poem in Letter XLIII to Southey, which need not be repeated here.]

A *mandrake* [45th line of poem] is a root resembling the human form, as sometimes a carrot does, and the old superstition is, that when the mandrake is torn out of the earth a dreadful shriek is heard, which makes all who hear it go mad. 'T is a fatal poison besides.

I will here conclude my tiny portion of prose with hoping you may like the story, and my kind remembrances to all.

C. LAMB

Write soon, Robert.

# XLIII. — TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

[Probably November, 1798.]

The following is a second extract from my tragedy *that is to be*, — 't is narrated by an old steward to Margaret, orphan ward of Sir Walter Woodvil; this, and the *Dying Lover* I gave you, are the only extracts I can give without mutilation. I expect you to like the old woman's curse, —

*Old Steward.* — One summer night, Sir Walter, as it  
chanc'd,  
Was pacing to and fro in the avenue  
That westward fronts our house,  
Among those aged oaks, said to have been planted  
Three hundred years ago  
By a neighb'ring Prior of the Woodvil name,  
But so it was,  
Being overtask't in thought, he heeded not  
The importune suitor who stood by the gate,  
And begg'd an alms.  
Some say he shov'd her rudely from the gate  
With angry chiding; but I can never think  
(Sir Walter's nature hath a sweetness in it)  
That he would use a woman — an old woman —  
With such discourtesy;  
For old she was who begg'd an alms of him.  
Well, he refus'd her;  
Whether for importunity, I know not,  
Or that she came between his meditations.  
But better had he met a lion in the streets  
Than this old woman that night;  
For she was one who practis'd the black arts,  
And served the devil — being since burn'd for witchcraft.  
She look'd at him like one that meant to blast him,  
And with a frightful noise

('T was partly like a woman's voice,  
And partly like the hissing of a snake)  
She nothing said but this (Sir Walter told the words) :

“A mischief, mischief, mischief,  
And a nine-times killing curse,  
By day and by night, to the caitive wight  
Who shakes the poor like snakes from his door,  
And shuts up the womb of his purse;  
And a mischief, mischief, mischief,  
And a ninefold withering curse, —  
For that shall come to thee, that will render thee  
Both all that thou fear'st, and worse.”

These words four times repeated, she departed,  
Leaving Sir Walter like a man beneath  
Whose feet a scaffolding had suddenly fall'n :  
So he describ'd it.

*Margaret.* — A terrible curse !

*Old Steward.* — O Lady, such bad things are told of that old  
woman,

As, namely, that the milk she gave was sour,  
And the babe who suck'd her shrivel'd like a mandrake;  
And things besides, with a bigger horror in them,  
Almost, I think, unlawful to be told !

*Margaret.* — Then must I never hear them. But proceed,  
And say what follow'd on the witch's curse.

*Old Steward.* — Nothing immediate ; but some nine months  
after,

Young Stephen Woodvil suddenly fell sick,  
And none could tell what ail'd him : for he lay,  
And pin'd, and pin'd, that all his hair came off ;  
And he, that was full-flesh'd, became as thin  
As a two-months' babe that hath been starved in the nursing;  
And sure, I think,  
He bore his illness like a little child,  
With such rare sweetness of dumb melancholy  
He strove to clothe his agony in smiles,  
Which he would force up in his poor, pale cheeks,

Like ill-tim'd guests that had no proper business there ;  
And when they ask'd him his complaint, he laid  
His hand upon his heart to show the place  
Where Satan came to him a nights, he said,  
And prick'd him with a pin.  
And hereupon Sir Walter call'd to mind  
The beggar witch that stood in the gateway,  
And begg'd an alms —

*Margaret.* — I do not love to credit tales of magic.  
Heav'n's music, which is order, seems unstrung;  
And this brave world,  
Creation's beauteous work, unbeautified,  
Disorder'd, marr'd, where such strange things are acted.

This is the extract I bragg'd of, as superior to  
that I sent you from Marlow. Perhaps you smile;  
but I should like your remarks on the above, as  
you are deeper witch-read than I.

#### XLIV.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

November 28, 1798.

I can have no objection to your printing *Mystery of God* with my name and all due acknowledgments for the honour and favour of the communication ; indeed, 't is a poem that can dishonour no name. Now, that is in the true strain of modern *modesto-vanitas*. But for the sonnet, I heartily wish it, as I thought it was, forgotten. If the exact circumstances under which I wrote could be known or told, it would be an interesting sonnet; but to an indifferent reader it must appear a very bald thing, certainly inadmissible in a compilation. I wish you could affix a different name to the



volume; there is a contemptible book, a wretched assortment of vapid feelings, entitled *Pratt's Gleanings*, which hath damned and impropriated the title for ever. Pray think of some other. The gentleman is better known (better had he remained unknown) by an *Ode to Benevolence*, written and spoken for and at the annual dinner of the Humane Society, who walk in procession once a-year, with all the objects of their charity before them, to return God thanks for giving them such benevolent hearts.

I like *Bishop Bruno*; but not so abundantly as your *Witch Ballad*, which is an exquisite thing of its kind.

I showed my *Witch* and *Dying Lover* to Dyer last night; but George could not comprehend how that could be poetry which did not go upon ten feet, as George and his predecessors had taught it to do; so George read me some lectures on the distinguishing qualities of the ode, the epigram, and the epic, and went home to illustrate his doctrine by correcting a proof-sheet of his own lyrics. George writes odes where the rhymes, like fashionable man and wife, keep a comfortable distance of six or eight lines apart, and calls that "observing the laws of verse." George tells you, before he recites, that you must listen with great attention, or you 'll miss the rhymes. I did so, and found them pretty exact. George, speaking of the dead Ossian, exclaimeth, "Dark are the poet's eyes." I humbly represented to him that

his own eyes were dark [?light], and many a living bard's besides, and recommended "Clos'd are the poet's eyes." But that would not do. I found there was an antithesis between the darkness of his eyes and the splendour of his genius; and I acquiesced.

Your recipe for a Turk's poison is invaluable and truly Marlowish. . . . Lloyd objects to "shutting up the womb of his purse" in my *Curse* (which for a Christian witch in a Christian country is not too mild, I hope); do you object? I think there is a strangeness in the idea, as well as "shaking the poor like snakes from his door," which suits the speaker. Witches illustrate, as fine ladies do, from their own familiar objects, and snakes and the shutting up of wombs are in their way. I don't know that this last charge has been before brought against 'em, nor either the sour milk or the mandrake babe; but I affirm these be things a witch would do if she could.

My tragedy will be a medley (as I intend it to be a medley) of laughter and tears, prose and verse, and in some places rhyme, songs, wit, pathos, humour, and, if possible, sublimity; at least, it is not a fault in my intention, if it does not comprehend most of these discordant colours. Heaven send they dance not the *Dance of Death*! I hear that the *Two Noble Englishmen* have parted no sooner than they set foot on German earth, but I have not heard the reason—possibly, to give novelists an handle to exclaim, "Ah me! what things

are perfect?" I think I shall adopt your emendation in the *Dying Lover*, though I do not myself feel the objection against *Silent Prayer*.

My tailor has brought me home a new coat lapelled, with a velvet collar. He assures me everybody wears velvet collars now. Some are born fashionable, some achieve fashion, and others, like your humble servant, have fashion thrust upon them. The rogue has been making inroads hitherto, by modest degrees, foisting upon me an additional button, recommending gaiters ; but to come upon me thus in a full tide of luxury, neither becomes him as a tailor nor the ninth of a man. My meek gentleman was robbed the other day, coming with his wife and family in a one-horse shay from Hampstead ; the villains rifled him of four guineas, some shillings and half-pence, and a bundle of customers' measures, which they swore were bank-notes. They did not shoot him, and when they rode off he address them with profound gratitude, making a congee: "Gentlemen, I wish you good night, and we are very much obliged to you that you have not used us ill!" And this is the cuckoo that has had the audacity to foist upon me ten buttons on a side and a black velvet collar,—a damn'd ninth of a scoundrel !

When you write to Lloyd, he wishes his Jacobin correspondents to address him as *Mr. C. L.* Love and respects to Edith. I hope she is well.

Yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

## XLV.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

December 27, 1798.

Dear Southey, — Your friend John May has formerly made kind offers to Lloyd of serving me in the India house by the interest of his friend Sir Francis Baring — It is not likely that I shall ever put his goodness to the test on my own account, for my prospects are very comfortable. But I know a man, a young man, whom he could serve thro' the same channel, and I think would be disposed to serve if he were acquainted with his case. This poor fellow (whom I know just enough of to vouch for his strict integrity and worth) has lost two or three employments from illness, which he cannot regain; he was once insane, and from the distressful uncertainty of his livelihood has reason to apprehend a return of that malady. He has been for some time dependent on a woman whose lodger he formerly was, but who can ill afford to maintain him, and I know that on Christmas night last he actually walk'd about the streets all night, rather than accept of her bed, which she offer'd him, and offer'd herself to sleep in the kitchen, and that in consequence of that severe cold he is labouring under a bilious disorder, besides a depression of spirits, which incapacitates him from exertion when he most needs it. For God's sake, Southey, if it does not go against you to ask favors, do it now, — ask it as for me; but do not do a violence

to your feelings, because he does not know of this application, and will suffer no disappointment. What I meant to say was this, — there are in the India house what are called *extra clerks*, not on the establishment, like me, but employed in extra business, by-jobs, — these get about £50 a year, or rather more, but never rise, — a director can put in at any time a young man in this office, and it is by no means consider'd so great a favor as making an establish'd clerk. He would think himself as rich as an emperor if he could get such a certain situation, and be relieved from those inquietudes which I do fear may one day bring back his distemper.

You know John May better than I do, but I know enough to believe that he is a good man; he did make me that offer I have mention'd, but you will perceive that such an offer cannot authorize me in applying for another person.

But I cannot help writing to you on the subject, for the young man is perpetually before my eyes, and I should feel it a crime not to strain all my petty interest to do him service, tho' I put my own delicacy to the question by so doing. I have made one other unsuccessful attempt already.

At all events I will thank you to write, for I am tormented with anxiety.

I suppose you have somewhere heard that poor Mary Dollin has poisoned herself, after some in-

terviews with John Reid, the *ci-devant* Alphonso of her days of hope.

How is Edith?

C. LAMB

## XLVI.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

January 21, 1799.

I am requested by Lloyd to excuse his not replying to a kind letter received from you. He is at present situated in most distressful family perplexities, which I am not at liberty to explain; but they are such as to demand all the strength of his mind, and quite exclude any attention to foreign objects. His brother Robert (the flower of his family) hath eloped from the persecutions of his father, and has taken shelter with me. What the issue of his adventure will be, I know not. He hath the sweetness of an angel in his heart, combined with admirable firmness of purpose; an uncultivated, but very original, and, I think, superior genius. But this step of his is but a small part of their family troubles.

I am to blame for not writing to you before on *my own account*; but I know you can dispense with the expressions of gratitude, or I should have thanked you before for all May's kindness. He has liberally supplied the person I spoke to you of with money, and had procured him a situation just after himself had lighted upon a similar one and engaged too far to recede. But May's kindness was the same, and my thanks to



you and him are the same. May went about on this business as if it had been his own. But you knew John May before this: so I will be silent.

I shall be very glad to hear from you when convenient. I do not know how your *Calendar* and other affairs thrive; but, above all, I have not heard a great while of your *Madoc*, — the *opus magnum*. I would willingly send you something to give a value to this letter; but I have only one slight passage to send you, scarce worth the sending, which I want to edge in somewhere into my play, which, by the way, hath not received the addition of ten lines, besides, since I saw you. A father, old Walter Woodvil (the witch's *protégé*), relates this of his son John, who "fought in adverse armies," being a royalist, and his father a parliamentary man, —

I saw him in the day of Worcester fight,  
Whither he came at twice seven years,  
Under the discipline of the Lord Falkland  
(His uncle by the mother's side,  
Who gave his youthful politics a bent  
Quite *from* the principles of his father's house);  
There did I see this valiant Lamb of Mars,  
This sprig of honour, this unbearded John,  
This veteran in green years, this sprout, this Woodvil  
(With dreadful ease guiding a fire-hot steed,  
Which seem'd to scorn the manage of a boy),  
Prick forth with such a *mirth* into the field,  
To mingle rivalry and acts of war  
Even with the sinewy masters of the art, —  
You would have thought the work of blood had been  
A play-game merely, and the rabid Mars  
Had put his harmful hostile nature off,

To instruct raw youth in images of war,  
And practice of the unedged players' foils.  
The rough fanatic and blood-practised soldiery  
Seeing such hope and virtue in the boy,  
Disclosed their ranks to let him pass unhurt,  
Checking their swords' uncivil injuries,  
As loth to mar that curious workmanship  
Of Valour's beauty pourtray'd in his face.

Lloyd objects to "pourtrayed in his face," —  
do you? I like the line.

I shall clap this in somewhere. I think there  
is a spirit through the lines; perhaps the 7th, 8th,  
and 9th owe their origin to Shakspeare, though  
no image is borrowed.

He says in "Henry the Fourth" —

This infant Hotspur,  
Mars in swathing clothes.

But pray did Lord Falkland die before Worces-  
ter fight? In that case I must make bold to  
unclify some other nobleman.

Kind love and respects to Edith.

C. LAMB

## XLVII.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

[Late January or early February, 1799.]

Dear Southey, — Lloyd will now be able to  
give you an account of himself, so to him I leave  
you for satisfaction. Great part of his troubles  
are lightened by the partial recovery of his sis-  
ter, who had been alarmingly ill with similar  
diseases to his own. The other part of the family

troubles sleeps for the present, but I fear will awake at some future time to *confound* and *dis-unite*. He will probably tell you all about it. Robert still continues here with me; his father has proposed nothing, but would willingly lure him back with fair professions. But Robert is endowed with a wise fortitude, and in this business has acted quite from himself, and wisely acted. His parents must come forward in the end. I like reducing parents to a sense of undutifulness. I like confounding the relations of life. Pray let me see you when you come to town, and contrive to give me some of your company.

I thank you heartily for your intended presents, but do by no means see the necessity you are under of burthening yourself thereby. You have read old Wither's *Supersedeas* to small purpose. You object to my pauses being at the end of my lines. I do not know any great difficulty I should find in diversifying or changing my blank verse; but I go upon the model of Shakspeare in my Play, and endeavour after a colloquial ease and spirit, something like him. I could so easily imitate Milton's versification; but my ear and feeling would reject it, or any approaches to it, in the *drama*. I do not know whether to be glad or sorry that witches have been detected aforesaid in shutting up of wombs. I certainly invented that conceit, and its coincidence with fact is incidental [*? accidental*], for I never heard it. I have not seen those verses

on Col. Despard : I do not read any newspapers.  
Are they short, to copy without much trouble?  
I should like to see them.

I just send you a few rhymes from my play,  
the only rhymes in it,—a forest-liver giving an  
account of his amusements,—

What sports have you in the forest ?  
Not many, — some few, — as thus,  
To see the sun to bed, and see him rise,  
Like some hot amourist with glowing eyes,  
Bursting the lazy bands of sleep that bound him,  
With all his fires and travelling glories round him :  
Sometimes the moon on soft night-clouds to rest,  
Like beauty nestling in a young man's breast,  
And all the winking stars, her handmaids, keep  
Admiring silence, while those lovers sleep :  
Sometimes outstretch'd in very idleness,  
Nought doing, saying little, thinking less,  
To view the leaves, thin dancers upon air,  
Go eddying round ; and small birds how they fare,  
When mother Autumn fills their beaks with corn,  
Filch'd from the careless Amalthea's horn ;  
And how the woods berries and worms provide,  
Without their pains, when earth hath nought beside  
To answer their small wants ;  
To view the graceful deer come trooping by,  
Then pause, and gaze, then turn they know not why,  
Like bashful youngers in society ;  
To mark the structure of a plant or tree ;  
And all fair things of earth, how fair they be ! &c., &c.

I love to anticipate charges of unoriginality :  
the first line is almost Shakspeare's, —

To have my love to bed and to arise.

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

I think there is a sweetness in the versification

not unlike some rhymes in that exquisite play,  
and the last line but three is yours, —

An eye  
That met the gaze, or turn'd it knew not why.  
*Rosamund's Epistle.*

I shall anticipate all my play, and have nothing  
to shew you.

An idea for Leviathan, —

Commentators on Job have been puzzled to  
find out a meaning for Leviathan, — 't is a whale,  
say some; a crocodile, say others. In my simple  
conjecture, Leviathan is neither more nor less  
than the Lord Mayor of London for the time  
being.

*Rosamund* sells well in London, maugre the  
non-reviewal of it.

I sincerely wish you better health, and better  
health to Edith. Kind remembrances to her.

C. LAMB

If you come to town by Ash Wensday [Feb-  
ruary 6], you will certainly see Lloyd here —  
I expect him by that time.

My sister Mary was never in better health or  
spirits than now.

#### XLVIII. — TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

March 15, 1799.

Dear Southey, — I have received your little  
volume, for which I thank you, though I do

not entirely approve of this sort of intercourse, where the presents are all one side. I have read the last eclogue again with great pleasure. It hath gained considerably by abridgment, and now I think it wants nothing but enlargement. You will call this one of tyrant Procrustes' criticisms, to cut and pull so to his own standard; but the old lady is so great a favourite with me, I want to hear more of her; and of *Joanna* you have given us still less. But the picture of the rustics leaning over the bridge, and the old lady travelling abroad on a summer evening to see her garden watered, are images so new and true, that I decidedly prefer this *Ruin'd Cottage* to any poem in the book. Indeed I think it the only one that will bear comparison with your *Hymn to the Penates* in a former volume.

I compare dissimilar things, as one would a rose and a star for the pleasure they give us, or as a child soon learns to choose between a cake and a rattle; for dissimilars have mostly some points of comparison. The next best poem, I think, is the first eclogue; 't is very complete, and abounding in little pictures and realities. The remainder eclogues, excepting only the *Funeral*, I do not greatly admire. I miss *one*, which had at least as good a title to publication as the *Witch*, or the *Sailor's Mother*. You call'd it the *Last of the Family*. The *Old Woman of Berkeley* comes next; in some humours I would give it the preference above any. But who the



devil is Matthew of Westminster? You are as familiar with these antiquated monastics, as Swedenborg, or, as his followers affect to call him, the Baron, with his invisibles. But you have raised a very comic effect out of the true narrative of Matthew of Westminster. 'Tis surprising with how little addition you have been able to convert with so little alteration his incidents, meant for terror, into circumstances and food for the spleen. The Parody is *not* so successful; it has one famous line indeed, which conveys the finest death-bed image I ever met with, —

The doctor whisper'd the nurse, and the surgeon knew what he said.

But the offering the bride three times bears not the slightest analogy or proportion to the fiendish noises three times heard! In *Jaspar*, the circumstance of the great light is very affecting. But I had heard you mention it before. The *Rose* is the only insipid piece in the volume; it hath neither thorns nor sweetness, and, besides, sets all chronology and probability at defiance.

*Cousin Margaret*, you know, I like. The allusions to the *Pilgrim's Progress* are particularly happy, and harmonise tacitly and delicately with old cousins and aunts. To familiar faces we do associate familiar scenes and accustomed objects; but what hath Apollidon and his sea-nymphs to do in these affairs? Apolyon I could have borne, though he stands for the devil; but who is Apollidon? I think you are too apt to conclude

faintly, with some cold moral, as in the end of the poem called *The Victory*,—

Be thou her comforter, who art the widow's friend ;

a single commonplace line of comfort, which bears no proportion in weight or number to the many lines which describe suffering. This is to convert religion into mediocre feelings, which should burn and glow and tremble. A moral should be wrought into the body and soul, the matter and tendency, of a poem, not tagged to the end, like a "God send the good ship into harbour," at the conclusion of our bills of lading. The finishing of the *Sailor* is also imperfect. Any dissenting minister may say and do as much.

These remarks, I know, are crude and unwrought; but I do not lay claim to much accurate thinking. I never judge system-wise of things, but fasten upon particulars. After all, there is a great deal in the book that I must, for time, leave *unmentioned*, to deserve my thanks for its own sake, as well as for the friendly remembrances implied in the gift. I again return you my thanks.

Pray present my love to Edith. C. L.

#### XLIX.—TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

March 20, 1799.

I am hugely pleased with your *Spider*, "your old freemason," as you call him. The three first

stanzas are delicious ; they seem to me a compound of Burns and Old Quarles, those kind of home-strokes, where more is felt than strikes the ear ; a terseness, a jocular pathos, which makes one feel in laughter. The measure, too, is novel and pleasing. I could almost wonder Rob. Burns in his lifetime never stumbled upon it. The fourth stanza is less striking, as being less original. The fifth falls off. It has no felicity of phrase, no old-fashioned phrase or feeling.

Young hopes, and love's delightful dreams,

savour neither of Burns nor Quarles ; they seem more like shreds of many a modern sentimental sonnet. The last stanza hath nothing striking in it, if I except the two concluding lines, which are Burns all over. I wish, if you concur with me, these things could be looked to. I am sure this is a kind of writing, which comes tenfold better recommended to the heart, comes there more like a neighbour or familiar, than thousands of Hamuels and Zillahs and Madelons.

I beg you will send me the *Holly-tree*, if it at all resemble this, for it must please me. I have never seen it. I love this sort of poems, that open a new intercourse with the most despised of the animal and insect race. I think this vein may be further opened : Peter Pindar hath very prettily apostrophised a fly ; Burns hath his mouse and his louse ; Coleridge, less successfully, hath made overtures of intimacy to a jackass, therein only following

at unressembling distance Sterne and greater Cervantes. Besides these, I know of no other examples of breaking down the partition between us and our "poor earth-born companions."

It is sometimes revolting to be put in a track of feeling by other people, not one's own immediate thoughts, else I would persuade you, if I could (I am in earnest), to commence a series of these animal poems, which might have a tendency to rescue some poor creatures from the antipathy of mankind. Some thoughts come across me ; for instance, to a rat, to a toad, to a cockchafer, to a mole, people bake moles alive by a slow oven-fire to cure consumption. Rats are, indeed, the most despised and contemptible parts of God's earth. I killed a rat the other day by punching him to pieces, and feel a weight of blood upon me to this hour. Toads you know are made to fly, and tumble down and crush all to pieces. Cockchafers are old sport ; then again to a worm, with an apostrophe to anglers, those patient tyrants, meek inflictors of pangs intolerable, cool devils ; to an owl ; to all snakes, with an apology for their poison ; to a cat in boots or bladders. Your own fancy, if it takes a fancy to these hints, will suggest many more.

A series of such poems, suppose them accompanied with plates descriptive of animal torments, cooks roasting lobsters, fishmongers crimping skates, &c., &c., would take excessively. I will willingly enter into a partnership in the plan with you: I think my heart and soul would go with

it too, at least, give it a thought. My plan is but this minute come into my head; but it strikes me instantaneously as something new, good and useful, full of pleasure and full of moral. If old Quarles and Wither could live again, we would invite them into our firm. Burns hath done his part.

I the other day threw off an extempore epitaph on Ensign Peacock of the 3rd Regt. of the Royal East India Volunteers, who like other boys in this scarlet tainted age was ambitious of playing at soldiers, but dying in the first flash of his valour was at the particular instance of his relations buried with military honours! like any veteran scarr'd or chopt from Blenheim or Ramilies. (He was buried in sash and gorget.)

#### MARMOR LOQUITUR

Here lies a Volunteer so fine,  
Who died of a decline,  
As you or I, may do one day;  
Reader, think of this, I pray;  
And I humbly hope you'll drop a tear  
For my poor Royal Volunteer.  
He was as brave as brave could be,  
Nobody was so brave as he;  
He would have died in Honor's bed,  
Only he died at home instead.  
Well may the Royal Regiment swear,  
They never had such a Volunteer.  
But whatsoever they may say,  
Death is a man that will have his way:  
Tho' he was but an ensign in this world of pain;  
In the next we hope he'll be a captain.

And without meaning to make any reflection on his mentals, He begg'd to be buried in regimentals.

*Sed hae sunt lamentabilis nugae* — but 't is as good as some epitaphs you and I have read together in Christ-Church-yard.

Poor Sam Le Grice! I am afraid the world, and the camp, and the university, have spoilt him among them. 'Tis certain he had at one time a strong capacity of turning out something better. I knew him, and that not long since, when he had a most warm heart. I am ashamed of the indifference I have sometimes felt towards him. I think the devil is in one's heart. I am under obligations to that man for the warmest friendship and heartiest sympathy, even for an agony of sympathy exprest both by word and deed, and tears for me, when I was in my greatest distress. But I have forgot that! as, I fear, he has nigh forgot the awful scenes which were before his eyes when he served the office of a comforter to me. No service was too mean or troublesome for him to perform. I can't think what but the devil, "that old spider," could have suck'd my heart so dry of its sense of all gratitude. If he does come in your way, Southey, fail not to tell him that I retain a most affectionate remembrance of his old friendliness, and an earnest wish to resume our intercourse. In this I am serious. I cannot recommend him to your society, because I am afraid whether he be quite worthy of it. But I have no right to dismiss him from *my* regard.



He was at one time, and in the worst of times, my own familiar friend, and great comfort to me then. I have known him to play at cards with my father, meal-times excepted, literally all day long, in long days too, to save me from being teased by the old man, when I was not able to bear it.

God bless him for it, and God bless you,  
Southey. C. L.

#### L. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

[? September — October 1799.]

My dear Robert, — I suppose by this time you have returned from Worcester with Uncle Nehemiah. You neglected to inform me whether Charles is yet at Birm[ingham]. I have heard here, that he is returned to Cambridge. Give him a gentle tap on the shoulder to remind him how truly acceptable a letter from him would be. I have nothing to write about.

Thomson remains with me. He is perpetually getting into mental vagaries. He is in *Love* and tosses and tumbles about in his bed, like a man in a barrel of spikes. He is more sociable; but I am heartily sick of his domesticating with me; he wants so many sympathies of mine, and I want his, that we are daily declining into *civility*. I shall be truly glad when he is gone. I find 't is a dangerous experiment to grow too familiar. Some natures cannot bear it without converting into indifference

—I know but one being that I could ever consent to live perpetually with, and that is Robert. But Robert must go whither prudence and paternal regulations indicate a way. I shall not soon forget you — do not fear that — nor grow cool towards Robert. My not writing is no proof of these disloyalties. Perhaps I am unwell, or vexed, or spleen'd, or something, when I should otherwise write.

Assure Charles of my unalterable affection, and present my warmest wishes for his and Sophia's happiness. How goes on Priscilla? I am much pleased with his Poems in the *Anthology* — one in particular. The other is a kind and no doubt just tribute to Robert and Olivia; but I incline to opinion that these domestic addresses should not always be made public. I have, I know, more than once exposed my own secretest feelings of that nature, but I am sorry that I did. — Nine out of ten readers laugh at them. When a man dies leaving the name of a great Author behind him, any unpublished relicks which let one into his domestic retirements are greedily gathered up, which in his lifetime, and before his fame had ripened, would by many be considered as impertinent. But if Robert and his sister were gratify'd with seeing their brother's heart in print, let the rest of the world go hang. They may prefer the remaining trumpery of the *Anthology*.

All I mean to say is, I think I perceive an indelicacy in thus exposing one's virtuous feelings to criticism. But of delicacy Charles is at least as

true a judge as myself. Pray request him to let me somehow have a sight of his novel. I declined offering it here for sale for good reasons as I thought — being unknown to Booksellers, and not made for making bargains — but for that reason I am not to be punished with not seeing the book. I shall count it a kindness if Chas. will send me the manuscript, which shall certainly be returned.

[Remainder of letter missing.]

## LI.— TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

October 31, 1799.

Dear Southey, — I have but just got your letter, being returned from Herts, where I have passed a few red-letter days with much pleasure. I would describe the county to you, as you have done by Devonshire, but, alas! I am a poor pen at that same. I could tell you of an old house with a tapestry bed-room, the “ Judgment of Solomon ” composing one panel, and “ Actæon spying Diana naked ” the other. I could tell of an old marble hall, with Hogarth’s prints and the Roman Cæsars in marble hung round. I could tell of a *wilderness*, and of a village church, and where the bones of my honoured grandam lie; but there are feelings which refuse to be translated, sulky aborigines, which will not be naturalised in another soil. Of this nature are old family faces and scenes of infancy.

I have given your address, and the books you

want, to the Arches; they will send them as soon as they can get them, but they do not seem quite familiar to their names. I have seen *Gebor!* *Gebor* aptly so denominated from Geborish, *quasi* Gibberish. But *Gebor* hath some lucid intervals. I remember darkly one beautiful simile veiled in uncouth phrases about the youngest daughter of the Ark.

I shall have nothing to communicate, I fear, to the *Anthology*. You shall have some fragments of my play, if you desire them, but I think I would rather print it whole. Have you seen it, or shall I lend you a copy? I want your opinion of it.

I must get to business, so farewell. My kind remembrances to Edith.

C. LAMB

## LII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

December, 1799.

Dear Manning, — The particular kindness, even up to a degree of attachment, which I have experienced from you, seems to claim some distinct acknowledgment on my part. I could not content myself with a bare remembrance to you, conveyed in some letter to Lloyd.

Will it be agreeable to you, if I occasionally recruit your memory of me, which must else soon fade, if you consider the brief intercourse we have had? I am not likely to prove a troublesome

correspondent. My scribbling days are past. I shall have no sentiments to communicate, but as they spring up from some living and worthy occasion.

I look forward with great pleasure to the performance of your promise, that we should meet in London early in the ensuing year. The century must needs commence auspiciously for me, that brings with it Manning's friendship, as an earnest of its after gifts.

I should have written before, but for a troublesome inflammation in one of my eyes, brought on by night travelling with the coach windows sometimes up.

What more I have to say shall be reserved for a letter to Lloyd. I must not prove tedious to you in my first outside [outset], lest I should affright you by my ill-judged loquacity.

I am, yours most sincerely,

C. LAMB

#### NOTE

[This is the first letter that has been preserved in the important correspondence between Lamb and Manning. Lamb first met Manning at Cambridge, in the autumn of 1799, when on a visit to Charles Lloyd. Much of Manning's history will be unfolded as the letters proceed, but here it should be stated that he was born on November 8, 1772, and was thus a little more than two years older than Lamb. He was at this time acting as private tutor in mathematics at Cambridge, among his pupils being Charles Lloyd, of Caius, Manning's own college. Manning, however, did not take his degree, owing to an objection to oaths and tests.]

### LIII.—TO ROBERT LLOYD

17 December, '99.

Dear Rab,—Thy presents will be most acceptable, whenever they come, both for thy sake, and for the liquor, which is a beverage I most admire. Wine makes me hot, and brandy makes me drunk, but porter warms without intoxication; and elevates, yet not too much above the point of tranquillity. But I hope Robert will come himself, before the tap is out. He may be assured, that his good honest company is the most valuable present, after all, he can make us. These cold nights crave something, beside porter; good English mirth and heart's ease. Rob must contrive to pass some of his Christmas with us, or at least drink in the century with a welcome.

I have not seen your father or Priscilla since. Your father was in one of his best humours (I have seldom seen him in one not good),—and after dinner, while we were sitting comfortably before the parlour fire, after our wine, he beckoned me suddenly out of the room. I, expecting some secrets, followed him, but it was only to go and sit with him in the old forsaken compting house; which he declared to be the pleasantest spot in the house to him, and told me how much business used to be done there in former days. Your father whimsically mixes the good man and the man of business in his manners, but he is not less a good man for being a man of business.



He has conceived great hopes of thy one day uniting both characters, and I joyfully expect the same.

I hope to see Priscilla, for the first time, some day the end of this week, but think it at least dubious, as she stays in town but one day, I think your father said.

I wonder Rob could think I should take his presents in evil part. I am sure from him they are the genuine result of a sincere friendship, not immediately knowing how better to express itself. I shall enjoy them with tenfold gust, as being his presents. At the same time, I must remind him that such expressions, if too thickly repeated, would be in danger of proving oppressive.

I am not fond of presents all on one side, and Rob knows I have little to present to him, except the assurances of an undiminished and an undiminishable friendship. Rob will take as a hint what his friend does not mean as an affront — I hope our friendship will stand firm, without the help of scaffolding.

At the same time I am determined to enjoy Robert's present, and to drink his health in his own porter, and I hope he will be able to partake with us. Bread and cheese and a hearty sympathy may prove no bad supplement to Robert's good old English beverage. Charles has not written to me since I saw him. I trust he goes on as comfortably as I witness'd. — No husband and wife can be happier than Sophia and your brother

appear to be in each other's company. Robert must marry next — I look to see him get the start of Wordsworth and Priscilla, whom yet I wish to see united.

Farewell, dearest Rab,

C. L.

Mary joins with me in remembrances to Robert, and in expectation of the coming beverage — Do you think you shall be able to come? — Monday night, just porter time.

#### LIV. — TO THOMAS MANNING

December 28, 1799.

Dear Manning, — Having suspended my correspondence a decent interval, as knowing that even good things may be taken to satiety, a wish cannot but recur to learn whether you be still well and happy. Do all things continue in the state I left them in Cambridge? I dined with him in town and breakfasted with him and Priscilla, who you may tell Charles has promised to come and see me when she returns [to] Clapham. I will write to Charles on Monday.

Do your night parties still flourish? and do you continue to bewilder your company with your thousand faces, running down thro' all the keys of Idiotism (like Lloyd over his perpetual harpsichord), from the smile and the glimmer of half-sense and quarter-sense, to the grin and the hanging

lip of Betty Foy's own Johnny? And does the face-dissolving curfew sound at twelve? How unlike the great originals were your petty terrors in the postscript! not fearful enough to make a fairy shudder, or a Lilliputian fine lady, eight months full of child, miscarry. Yet one of them, which had more beast than the rest, I thought faintly resembled *one* of your brutifications. But, seriously, I long to see your own honest Manning-face again. I did not mean a pun,—your *man's* face, you will be apt to say, I know your wicked will to pun. I cannot now write to Lloyd and you too; so you must convey as much interesting intelligence as this may contain, or be thought to contain, to him and Sophia, with my dearest love and remembrances.

By the bye, I think you and Sophia both incorrect with regard to the *title* of the *play*. Allowing your objection (which is not necessary, as pride may be, and is in real life often, cured by misfortunes not directly originating from its own acts, as Jeremy Taylor will tell you a naughty desire is sometimes sent to cure it; I know you read these *practical divines*);—but allowing your objection, does not the betraying of his father's secret directly spring from pride?—from the pride of wine, and a full heart, and a proud overstepping of the ordinary rules of morality, and contempt of the prejudices of mankind, which are not to bind superior souls—“as *trust* in *the matter of secrets* all *ties* of *blood*, &c., &c., keep-

ing of *promises*, the feeble mind's religion, binding our *morning knowledge* to the performance of what *last night's ignorance* spake" — does he not prate, that "*Great Spirits*" must do more than die for their friend? Does not the pride of wine incite him to display some evidence of friendship, which its own irregularity shall make great? This I know, that I meant his punishment not alone to be a cure for his daily and habitual *pride*, but the direct consequence and appropriate punishment of a particular act of pride.

If you do not understand it so, it is my fault in not explaining my meaning.

I have not seen Coleridge since, and scarcely expect to see him,—perhaps he has been at Cambridge.

Need I turn over to blot a fresh clean half-sheet, merely to say, what I hope you are sure of without my repeating it, that I would have you consider me, dear Manning,

Your sincere friend,

C. LAMB

What is your *proper address*?

Is Mr. Lloyd at Cambridge? He talked uncertainly of going. I dined with him in town, and breakfasted with him and Priscilla, who, you may tell Charles, has promised to come and see me when she returns from Clapham. I will write to Charles on Monday.

## LV. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

January 2, 1800.

Dear Coleridge, — Now I write, I cannot miss this opportunity of acknowledging the obligations myself, and the readers in general of that luminous paper, the *Morning Post*, are under to you for the very novel and exquisite manner in which you combined political with grammatical science, in your yesterday's dissertation on Mr. Wyndham's unhappy composition. It must have been the death-blow to that ministry. I expect Pitt and Grenville to resign. More especially the delicate and Cottrellian grace with which you officiated, with a ferula for a white wand, as gentleman usher to the word "also," which it seems did not know its place.

I expect Manning of Cambridge in town to-night; will you fulfil your promise of meeting him at my house? He is a man of a thousand. Give me a line to say what day, whether Saturday, Sunday, Monday, &c., and if Sara and the Philosopher can come. I am afraid if I did not at intervals call upon you, I should *never see you*. But I forget, the affairs of the nation engross your time and your mind.

Farewell,

C. L.

### NOTE

[The first letter that has been preserved of the second period of Lamb's correspondence with Coleridge, which was to last until the end.]

## LVI. — TO THOMAS MANNING

February 13, 1800.

Dear Manning, — Olivia *is* a good girl, and if you turn to my letter you will find that this very plea you set up to vindicate Lloyd, I had made use of as a reason why he should never have employed Olivia to make a copy of such a letter! — a letter I could not have sent to my enemy's bitch, if she had thought proper to seek me in the way of marriage. But you see it in one view, I in another. Rest you merry in your opinion! Opinion is a species of property; and though I am always desirous to share with my friend to a certain extent, I shall ever like to keep some tenets, and some property, properly my own.

Some day, Manning, when we meet, substituting Corydon and fair Amaryllis, for Charles Lloyd and Mary Hayes, we will discuss together this question of moral feeling, "In what cases, and how far, sincerity is a virtue." I do not mean Truth, a good Olivia-like creature, God bless her, who, meaning no offence, is always ready to give an answer when she is asked why she did so and so; but a certain forward-talking half-brother of hers, Sincerity, that amphibious gentleman, who is so ready to perk up his obnoxious sentiments unasked into your notice, as Midas would his ears into your face, uncalled for. But I despair of doing anything by a letter in the way of explaining or coming to explanations.



A good wish, or a pun, or a piece of secret history, may be well enough that way convey'd; nay, it has been known, that intelligence of a turkey hath been conveyed by that medium without much ambiguity.

Godwin I am a good deal pleased with. He is a well-behaved, decent man; nothing very brilliant about him or imposing, as you may suppose; quite another guess sort of gentleman from what your Anti-jacobin Christians imagine him. I was well pleased to find he has neither horns nor claws; quite a tame creature, I assure you: a middle-sized man, both in stature and in understanding; whereas, from his noisy fame, you would expect to find a Briareus Centimanus, or a Tityus tall enough to pull Jupiter from his heavens.

I begin to think you atheists not quite so tall a species! Coleridge inquires after you pretty often. I wish to be the Pandar to bring you together again once before I day [die]. When we die, you and I must part; the sheep, you know, take the right-hand sign-post, and the goats the left. Stript of its allegory, you must know the sheep are *I*, and the Apostles, and the martyrs, and the Popes, and Bishop Taylor, and Bishop Horsley, and Coleridge, &c., &c. The goats are the atheists, and adulterers, and fornicators, and dumb dogs, and Godwin, and M——g, and that Thyestæan crew! Yaw! how my saintship sickens at the idea!

You shall have my play and the Falstaff's

Letters in a day or two. I will write to Ll[oyd] by this day's Post.

Pray, is it a part of your sincerity to show my letters to Lloyd? for, really, gentlemen ought to explain their virtues upon a first acquaintance, to prevent mistakes.

God bless you, Manning. Take my trifling *as trifling*; and believe me, seriously and deeply,  
Your well-wisher and friend,

C. L.

#### LVII.—TO THOMAS MANNING<sup>1</sup>

[February, 1800.]

Lloyd's letter to Miss Hays I look upon to be a most curious specimen of the apologetic style. How a man could write such a letter to a woman, and dream that there was in it any tendency to soothe or conciliate, from no analogous operations in my own wrong brain can I explain. "Mary Hays, I said that I believed that you were in love with me." "I had heard several times repeated that you had loved both Godwin and friend, moreover I had heard several times repeated that all your first novel was but a transcript of letters sent by yourself to the latter gentleman. I have been told this so often that it seems to my mind like a general report. I have heard it in all places." "Dr. Reid and I were laughing in the wantonness

<sup>1</sup> A facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.

in which our sex too often indulges at the consequence of your theories, and I most wickedly &c.'d." (In God's name, how came he and the Dr. so graciously familiar, just after he had discovered the Dr.'s complete worthlessness and wickedness?) "I most *wickedly* exprest myself as if I thought you would in conduct demonstrate all that you proposed in speculation! I did not say this grossly." (Wheugh! Wheugh! what a delicate invention, how to call a woman a whore, and not be indictable in the Spiritual Courts!) "In the confounding medley of ordinary conversation, I have interwoven my abhorrence of your principles with a glanced contempt for your personal character." But "in spite of all these inconsistencies I am your friend, and for the future, if we maintain our intercourse, will prove to you by conduct how severely I condemn the past." C. Lloyd must have a damned "spite to inconsistencies," if he can reconcile this language to the ordinary *Meaning* of the term apology.

Now, Manning, seriously, what do you think of this letter? does it appear that Coleridge has added one jot to what Miss Hays might fairly represent from Lloyd's own confession? You doubt whether Southey ever exprest himself so strongly on this subject. I suppose you refer to Coleridge's account of him. I can tell you that Southey did express himself in very harsh terms of Lloyd's conduct, when he was last in town. He came fresh from Miss Hays, who had given him all the story,

as I find she tells everybody ! and told Southey that she despised Lloyd. I am not sure that Southey was not in a humour, after this representation, to say all that Coleridge declared he did say. Particularly, if he saw this letter, which I believe he did.

Now, do not imagine that Coleridge has prejudiced my mind in this *at all*. The truth is, I write from my own single judgment, and when I shewed the letter to Coleridge, he read it in silence, or only once muttered the word “indelicate,” — But I should not have been easy in concealing my true sentiment from you. My whole moral sense is up in arms against the letter. To my apprehension, it is shockingly and nauseously indelicate, and I perceive an aggravation or multiplication of the indelicacy, in Lloyd’s getting his sister Olivia to transcribe it, — an ignorant Quaker girl, I mean ignorant in the best sense, who ought not to know that such a thing was possible or *in rerum natura*, that a woman should court a man ; and a dear sister, who least of all should apprehend such an omen realiz’d in her own brother. Manning, do not misapprehend me, I would not say so much to Lloyd’s own self, for this plain reason that I should not be able to convince him, and I would not cause unnecessary pain. Yet as much of this as your discretion and tenderness will give leave, you have my full leave to shew him ; but I *could* not let you remain ignorant of so big a part of my nature as now rises up against this ill-judged letter, particu-

larly as I am doubtful whether you may not see it in a quite different light.

So much for Lloyd's amours with Mary Hays, which would not form an unentertaining romance. From this time they are no concern of mine. I will sum up the controversy in the words of Coleridge, all he has since said to me, — "Miss Hayes has acted like a fool, and Charles Lloyd not very wisely." I cannot but smile at Lloyd's beginning to find out that Coleridge can tell lies. He brings a serious charge against him, that he told Caldwell he had no engagements with the newspapers! As long as Lloyd or I have known Coleridge so long have we known him in the daily and hourly habit of quizzing the world by lies, most unaccountable and most disinterested fictions. With a correct knowledge of these inaccuracies on both sides, I am still desirous of keeping on kind terms with Lloyd, and I am to sup with Coleridge to-night; Godwin will be there — whom I am rather curious to see — and Col. to partake with me of Manning's bounty to-morrow.

By the way, I am anxious to get specimens of all English turkeys. Pray, send me at your leisure separate specimens from every county in Great Britain, including Wales, as I hate nationalities. The Irish turkeys I will let alone, till the *union* is determined.

To sum up my inferences from the above facts, I am determined to live a merry life in the midst of sinners. I try to consider all men as such, and



to pitch my expectations from human nature as low as possible. In this view, all unexpected virtues are Godsend and beautiful exceptions. Only let *young Love* beware, when he sets out in his progress thro' life, how he forms erroneous conceptions of finding all saints! To conclude, the blessing of St. Peter's Master rest upon you and all honest anglers!

C. LAMB

Coleridge has conceived a most high (quære if just) opinion of you, most illustrious Archimedes. Philosopher Godwin dines with me on your turkey this day. I expect the roof to fall and crush the atheist. I have been drunk two nights running at Coleridge's. How my head burns!

The turkey is just come, — the largest I ever saw.

#### NOTE

[Mary Hayes was a friend of Mary Wollstonecraft, and also of Southey and Coleridge. She wrote a novel, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, which Lloyd says contained her own love-letters to Godwin and Froud, and also *Female Biography, or Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women*. Lloyd and she had been very intimate. A passage from a letter of Coleridge to Southey, dated January 25, 1800, bears upon the present situation: "Miss Hayes I have seen. Charles Lloyd's conduct has been atrocious beyond what you stated. Lamb himself confessed to me that during the time in which he kept up his ranting, sentimental correspondence with Miss Hayes, he frequently read her letters in company, as a subject for *laughter*, and then sate down and answered them quite à la Rousseau! Poor Lloyd! Every hour new-creates him; he is his own posterity in a perpetually flowing series, and his body unfortunately retaining an external identity, *their* mutual contradictions and disagreeings



are united under one name, and of course are called lies, treachery, and rascality !” — E. V. LUCAS.]

### LVIII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

[March 1, 1800.]

I hope by this time you are prepared to say, the “Falstaff’s Letters” are a bundle of the sharpest, queerest, profoundest humours, of any these juice-drained latter times have spawned. I should have advertised you, that the meaning is frequently hard to be got at; and so are the future guineas, that now lie ripening and aurifying in the womb of some undiscovered Potosi; but dig, dig, dig, dig, Manning!

I set to, with an unconquerable propulsion to write, with a lamentable want of what to write. My private goings on are orderly as the movements of the spheres, and stale as their music to angels’ ears. Public affairs — except as they touch upon me, and so turn into private, — I cannot whip my mind up to feel any interest in.

I grieve indeed that War, and Nature, and Mr. Pitt, that hangs up in Lloyd’s best parlour, should have conspired to call up three necessities, simple commoners as our fathers knew them, into the upper house of luxuries; bread, and beer, and coals, Manning. But as to France and Frenchman, and the Abbé Sieyès and his constitutions, I cannot make these present times present to me. I read histories of the past, and I live in them; although, to

abstract senses, they are far less momentous than the noises which keep Europe awake.

I am reading Burnet's *Own Times*. Did you ever read that garrulous, pleasant history? He tells his story like an old man past political service, bragging to his sons on winter evenings of the part he took in public transactions, when his "old cap was new." Full of scandal, which all true history is. No palliatives; but all the stark wickedness that actually gives the *momentum* to national actors. Quite the prattle of age, and outlived importance. Truth and sincerity staring out upon you perpetually in *alto rilievo*. Himself a party man — he makes you a party man. None of the damned philosophical Humeian indifference, so cold and unnatural and inhuman. None of the damned Gibbonian fine writing, so fine and composite. None of Mr. Robertson's periods with three members. None of Mr. Roscoe's sage remarks, all so apposite, and coming in so clever, lest the reader should have had the trouble of drawing an inference. Burnet's good old prattle I can bring present to my mind; I can make the revolution present to me: the French revolution, by a converse perversity in my nature, I fling as far *from* me. To quit this damned subject, and to relieve you from two or three dismal yawns, which I hear in spirit, I here conclude my more than commonly obtuse letter; dull, up to the dulness of a Dutch commentator on Shakspeare.

My love to Lloyd and to Sophia. C. L.

LIX. — TO THOMAS MANNING

March 17, 1800.

Dear Manning, — I am living in a continuous feast. Coleridge has been with me now for nigh three weeks, and the more I see of him in the quotidian undress and relaxation of his mind, the more cause I see to love him, and believe him a *very good man*, and all those foolish impressions to the contrary fly off like morning slumbers. He is engaged in translations, which I hope will keep him this month to come. He is uncommonly kind and friendly to me. He ferrets me day and night to *do something*. He tends me, amidst all his own worrying and heart-oppressing occupations, as a gardener tends his young *tulip*. Marry come up; what a pretty similitude, and how like your humble servant! He has lugged me to the brink of engaging to a newspaper, and has suggested to me, for a first plan, the forgery of a supposed manuscript of Burton, the Anatomist of Melancholy. I have even written the introductory letter; and, if I can pick up a few guineas this way, I feel they will be most *refreshing*, bread being so dear. If I go on with it, I will apprise you of it, as you may like to see my things! and the *tulip*, of all flowers, loves to be admired most.

Pray pardon me, if my letters do not come very thick. I am so taken up with one thing or other, that I cannot pick out (I will not say time, but) *fitting times* to write to you. My dear love to Lloyd

and Sophia, and pray split this thin letter into three parts, and present them with the *two biggest* in my name.

They are my oldest friends, but ever the new friend driveth out the old, as the ballad sings! God bless you all three! I would hear from Ll[oyd] if I could.

C. L.

Flour has just fallen nine shillings a sack! we shall be all too rich.

Tell Charles I have seen his mamma, and am almost fallen in love with *her*, since I mayn't with Olivia. She is so fine and graceful, a complete Matron-Lady-Quaker. She has given me two little books. Olivia grows a charming girl — full of feeling, and *thinner* than she was; but I have not time to fall in love!

Mary presents her *general compliments*. She keeps in fine health.

Huzza boys! and down with the Atheists!

#### NOTE

[Coleridge, having sent his wife and Hartley into the country, had, for a while, taken up his abode with Lamb at Pentonville, and given up the *Morning Post* in order to proceed with his translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*. Lamb's forgery of Burton, together with those mentioned in the next letter, which were never printed by Stuart, for whom they were written, was included in the *John Woodvil* volume, 1802, among the "Curious Fragments, extracted from a commonplace book, which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous Author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*." — E. V. LUCAS.]

## LX. — TO THOMAS MANNING

April 5, 1800.

C. L.'s MORAL SENSE presents her comp's to Doctor Manning, is very thankful for his medical advice, but is happy to add that her disorder has died of itself.

Dr. Manning, Coleridge has left us, to go into the North, on a visit to his God Wordsworth. With him have flown all my splendid prospects of Engagement with the *Morning Post*, all my visionary guineas, the deceitful wages of Unborn Scandal. In truth, I wonder you took it up so seriously. All my intention was but to make a little sport with such public and fair game as Mr. Pitt, Mr. Wilberforce, Mrs. Fitzherbert, the Devil, &c. — gentry dipt in Styx all over, whom no Paper Javelin-lings can touch. To have made free with these cattle, where was the Harm? 't would have been but giving a polish to Lamp-black, not nigrifying a negro primarily. After all, I cannot but regret my Involuntary Virtue. Damn Virtue that's thrust upon us. It behaves itself with such constraint, till conscience opens the window and lets out the Goose. I had struck off two imitations of Burton, quite abstracted from any modern allusions, which [it] was my intent only to lug in from time to time to make 'em Popular.

Stuart has got these, with an introductory Letter; but, not hearing from him, I have ceased

from my labours, but I write to him to-day to get a final answer. I am afraid they won't do for a paper. Burton is a scarce gentleman, not much known, else I had done 'em pretty well.

I have also hit off a few lines in the name of Burton, being a *Conceit of Diabolic Possession*. Burton was a man often assail'd by deep'st melancholy, and at other times much given to laughing and jesting, as is the way with melancholy men. I will send them you: they were almost extempore, and no great things; but you will indulge them. Rob[ert] Lloyd is come to town. He is a good fellow, with the best heart, but his feelings are shockingly *unsane*. Priscilla meditates going to see *Pizarro* at Drury Lane to-night (from her uncle's), under cover of coming to dine with me . . . *heu tempora! heu mores!*—I have barely time to finish, as I expect her and Robin every minute.

Yours as usual,

C. L.

#### LXI.—TO THOMAS MANNING<sup>\*</sup>

[April, 1800.]

I don't know whether you ever dipt into Burton's *Anatomy*. His manner is to shroud and carry off his feelings under a cloud of learned words. He has written but one Poem, which is

<sup>\*</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.



prefix'd to his *Anatomy* and called *The Abstract of Melancholy*. Most likely you have seen it. It is in the last edition of the *Elegant Extracts*. It begins, "When I go musing all alone, thinking of divers things foredone."—So that I have collected my imitation rather from his prose Book, than any poetry. I call it

#### A CONCEPT OF DIABOLICAL POSSESSION

By myself walking,	Thy friends are treacherous,
To myself talking,	Thy foes are dangerous,
While as I ruminate	Thy dreams ominous.
On my untoward fate,	
Scarcely seem I	Fierce Anthropolophagi,
Alone sufficiently ;	Spectra, Diaboli,
Black thoughts continually	What scared St. Anthony,
Crowding my privacy,	Shapes undefined,
They come unbidden,	With my fears twined,
Like foes at a wedding,	Hobgoblins, Lemures,
Thrusting their faces	Dreams of Antipodes,
In better guests' places,	Night-riding Incubi,
Peevish and malecontent,	Troubling the fantasy,
Clownish impertinents,	All dire illusions,
Dashing the merriments ; —	Causing confusions,
So in like fashion	Figments heretical,
Dim cogitations	Scruples fantastical,
Follow and haunt me,	Doubts diabolical,
Striving to daunt me,	Abaddon vexeth me,
In my heart festering,	Mahu <sup>1</sup> perplexeth me,
In my ears whispering,	Lucifer teareth me,

*Jesu, Maria, libera nos ab  
his tentationibus, orat, implorat,  
R. Burton Peccator.*

<sup>1</sup> The name of a great devil.

To this I will add a little song, which I paraphras'd for Coleridge from Schiller (which by the bye, is better than Schiller's ballad, a huge deal).

The clouds are black'ning, the storms threatening,  
And ever the forest maketh a moan,  
Billows are breaking, the Damsel's heart aching,  
Thus by herself she singeth alone,  
Weeping right plentifully.  
The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,  
In this world plainly all seemeth amiss,  
To thy breast, Holy One, take now thy little one,  
I have had earnest of all earth's bliss,  
Living right lovingly.

The manner in both is so antique, that I should despair of many folks liking them.

You may *perhaps* never have met with Percy's *Relicks of Ancient English Poetry*;—if you have, and are acquainted with the following poem, no harm is done; if not, I send you a treat;—that's all. It is in Scotch, and a very old Ballad. I anglicise it as I write it, for my own convenience.

#### EDWARD, EDWARD

(I change my mind, I will give it you in its own old Scottish shape. The rhimes else will be lost.)

Why does your Brand<sup>1</sup> so drop with bluid,  
Edward, Edward?  
Why does your Brand so drop with Bluid?  
And why so sad gang ye, O?

<sup>1</sup> Sword.

O! I have kill'd my hawk so gude,  
Mother, Mother.  
O! I have kill'd my hawk so gude,  
And I had no more but he, O!

Your hawk's bluid was never so red,  
Edward, Edward.  
Your hawk's bluid was never so red,  
My dear son, I tell thee, O!

O! I have kill'd my red-roan steed,  
Mother, Mother,  
O! I have kill'd my red-roan steed,  
That erst was so fair and free, O!

Your steed was auld, and ye ha' got more,  
Edward, Edward;  
Your steed was auld, and ye ha' got more,  
Some other dule ye drie, O.

O! I have kill'd my Father dear,  
Mother, Mother;  
O! I have kill'd my Father dear,  
Alas! and woe is me, O!

And whatten penance will ye do for that,  
Edward, Edward?  
And whatten penance will ye do for that?  
My dear son, now tell me, O!

I'll set my feet in yonder Boat,  
Mother, Mother,  
I'll set my feet in yonder Boat,  
And I'll far over the sea, O!

And what will you do with your towers and your hall?  
Edward! Edward!  
And what will you do with your towers and your hall,  
That were so fair to see, O?

I'll let them stand till they down fall,  
Mother! Mother!  
I'll let them stand till they down fall,  
For here never more must I be, O!

And what will you leave to your bairns and your wife?  
 Edward ! Edward !  
 And what will you leave to your bairns and your wife,  
 When you go over the sea, O ?

The World's room, let them beg through life?  
 Mother, Mother,  
 The World's room, let them beg thro' life,  
 For them never more will I see, O!

And what will ye leave to your own mother dear ?  
                   Edward, Edward,  
 And what will ye leave to your own mother dear ?  
                   My dear son, now tell me, O !

The curse of hell frae me shall ye hear,  
 Mother, Mother;  
 The curse of Hell frae me shall ye hear,  
 Sic counsels ye gave me, O !

! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !

By which I mean to say, that *Edward, Edward* is the very first dramatic poem in the English language. If you deny that, I'll make you eat your words.

C. LAMB

## LXII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Probably April 16 or 17, 1800.]

I send you, in this parcel, my play, which I beg you to present in my name, with my respect

and love, to Wordsworth and his sister. You blame us for giving your direction to Miss Wesley ; the woman has been ten times after us about it, and we gave it her at last, under the idea that no further harm would ensue, but she would *once* write to you, and you would bite your lips and forget to answer it, and so it would end. You read us a dismal homily upon *Realities*. We know, quite as well as you do, what are shadows and what are realities. You, for instance, when you are over your fourth or fifth jorum, chirping about old school occurrences, are the best of realities. Shadows are cold, thin things, that have no warmth or grasp in them. Miss Wesley and her friend, and a tribe of authoresses that come after you here daily, and, in defect of you, hive and cluster upon us, are the shadows. You encouraged that mopsey, Miss Wesley, to dance after you, in the hope of having her nonsense put into a nonsensical *Anthology*. We have pretty well shaken her off, by that simple expedient of referring her to you ; but there are more burrs in the wind.

I came home t'other day from business, hungry as a hunter, to dinner, with nothing, I am sure, of *the author but hunger* about me, and whom found I closeted with Mary but a friend of this Miss Wesley, one Miss Benje, or Benje ; I don't know how she spells her name. I just came in time enough, I believe, luckily to prevent them from exchanging vows of eternal friendship. It seems she is one of your authoresses, that you first

foster, and then upbraid us with. But I forgive you. "The rogue has given me potions to make me love him." Well; go she would not, nor step a step over our threshold, till we had promised to come and drink tea with her next night. I had never seen her before, and could not tell who the devil it was that was so familiar. We went, however, not to be impolite. Her lodgings are up two pairs of stairs in East Street. Tea and coffee, and macaroons—a kind of cake I much love. We sat down. Presently Miss Benje broke the silence, by declaring herself quite of a different opinion from D'Israeli, who supposes the differences of human intellect to be the mere effect of organization. She begged to know my opinion. I attempted to carry it off with a pun upon organ; but that went off very flat. She immediately conceived a very low opinion of my metaphysics; and, turning round to Mary, put some question to her in French,—possibly having heard that neither Mary nor I understood French. The explanation that took place occasioned some embarrassment and much wondering. She then fell into an insulting conversation about the comparative genius and merits of all modern languages, and concluded with asserting that the Saxon was esteemed the purest dialect in Germany. From thence she passed into the subject of poetry; where I, who had hitherto sat mute and a hearer only, humbly hoped I might now put in a word to some advantage, seeing that it was my own trade in



a manner. But I was stopped by a round assertion, that no good poetry had appeared since Dr. Johnson's time. It seems the doctor has suppressed many hopeful geniuses that way by the severity of his critical strictures in his *Lives of the Poets*. I here ventured to question the fact, and was beginning to appeal to *names*, but I was assured "it was certainly the case."

Then we discussed Miss More's book on education, which I had never read. It seems Dr. Gregory, another of Miss Benjey's friends, has found fault with one of Miss More's metaphors. Miss More has been at some pains to vindicate herself—in the opinion of Miss Benjey, not without success. It seems the doctor is invariably against the use of broken or mixed metaphor, which he reprobates against the authority of Shakspeare himself. We next discussed the question, whether Pope was a poet? I find Dr. Gregory is of opinion he was not, though Miss Seward does not at all concur with him in this. We then sat upon the comparative merits of the ten translations of *Pizarro*, and Miss Benjey or Benje advised Mary to take two of them home; she thought it might afford her some pleasure to compare them *verbatim*; which we declined. It being now nine o'clock, wine and macaroons were again served round, and we parted, with a promise to go again next week, and meet the Miss Porters, who, it seems, have heard much of Mr. Coleridge, and wish to meet *us*, because we are *his* friends. I

have been preparing for the occasion. I crowd cotton in my ears. I read all the reviews and magazines of the past month against the dreadful meeting, and I hope by these means to cut a tolerable second-rate figure.

Pray let us have no more complaints about shadows. We are in a fair way, *through you*, to surfeit sick upon them.

Our loves and respects to your host and hostess. Our dearest love to Coleridge.

Take no thought about your proof-sheets; they shall be done as if Woodfall himself did them. Pray send us word of Mrs. Coleridge and little David Hartley, your little reality.

Farewell, dear Substance. Take no umbrage at anything I have written.

C. LAMB, *Umbra*

Land of Shadows.

Shadow-month the 16th or 17th, 1800.

Coleridge, I find loose among your papers a copy of *Christabel*. It wants about thirty lines; you will very much oblige me by sending me the beginning as far as that line, —

And the spring comes slowly up this way;  
and the intermediate lines between, —

The lady leaps up suddenly,  
The lovely Lady Christabel;  
and the lines, —

She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.

The trouble to you *will be small*, and the benefit to us *very great*! A pretty antithesis! A figure in speech I much applaud.

Godwin has called upon us. He spent one evening here. Was very friendly. Kept us up till midnight. Drank punch, and talked about you. He seems, above all men, mortified at your going away. Suppose you were to write to that good-natured heathen — “or is he a *shadow*?” If I do not *write*, impute it to the long postage, of which you have so much cause to complain. I have scribbled over a *queer letter*, as I find by perusal; but it means no mischief.

I am, and will be, yours ever, in sober sadness,  
C. L.

Write your *German* as plain as sunshine, for that must correct itself. You know I am *homo unius linguae*: in English, illiterate, a dunce, a ninny.

### LXIII. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

[April 23, 1800.]

My dear Robert, — I acknowledge I have been sadly remiss of late. If I descend to any excuse (and all excuses that come short of a direct denial of a charge are poor creatures at best), it must be taken from my state of mind for some time past, which has been stupid rather, and unfilled with any object, than occupied, as you may imagine, with any favourite idea to the exclusion of friend

Robert. You, who are subject to all the varieties of the mind, will give me credit in this.

I am sadly sorry that you are relapsing into your old complaining strain. I wish I could adapt my consolations to your disease, but alas, I have none to offer which your own mind, and the suggestions of books, cannot better supply. Are you the first whose situation hath not been exactly squar'd to his ideas? or rather, will you find me that man, who does not complain of the one thing wanting? that thing obtained, another wish will start up. While this eternal craving of the mind keeps up its eternal hunger, no feast that my palate knows of will satisfy that hunger, till we come to drink the new wine (whatever it be) in the kingdom of the Father.

See what trifles disquiet us. You are unhappy because your parents expect you to attend meetings. I don't know much of quakers' meetings, but I believe I may moderately reckon them to take up the space of six hours in the week: Six hours to please your parents — and that time not absolutely lost. Your mind remains; you may think and plan, remember and foresee, and do all human acts of mind sitting as well as walking. You are quiet at meeting; one likes to be so sometimes. You may advantageously crowd your day's devotions into that space: nothing you see or hear there can be unfavorable to it: you are for that time at least exempt from the counting-house, and your parents cannot chide you there. Surely at so

small an expense you cannot grudge to observe the 5th Commandment. I decidedly consider your refusal as a breach of that God-descended precept — Honour and observe thy parents in all lawful things.

Silent worship cannot be Unlawful. There is no Idolatry, no invocation of saints, no bowing before the consecrated wafer, in all this — nothing which a wise man would refuse, or a good man fear to do. What is it? Sitting a few hours in a week with certain good people, who call *that* worship. You subscribe to no articles. If your mind wanders, it is no crime in you, who do not give credit to these infusions of the Spirit. They sit in a temple, you sit as in a room adjoining — only do not disturb their pious work with grabbling, nor your own necessary peace with heart-burnings at your not-ill-meaning parents, nor a silly contempt of the work which is going on before you. I know that if my parents were to live again, I would do more things to please them, than merely sitting still six hours in a week. Perhaps I enlarge too much on this affair, but indeed your objection seems to me ridiculous, and involving in it a principle of frivolous and vexatious resistance.

You have often borne with my freedoms, bear with me once more in this. If I did not love you, I should not trouble myself whether you went to meeting or not — whether you conform'd or not to the will of your father.

I am now called off to dinner before one o'clock. Being a holyday, we dine early, for Mary and me to have a long walk afterwards.

My kindest remembrance to Charles. God give him all joy and quiet.

Mary sends her Love.

C. L.

#### LXIV.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

Monday, May 12, 1800.

My dear Coleridge,—I don't know why I write, except from the propensity misery has to tell her griefs. Hetty died on Friday night, about eleven o'clock, after eight days' illness; Mary, in consequence of fatigue and anxiety, is fallen ill again, and I was obliged to remove her yesterday. I am left alone in a house with nothing but Hetty's dead body to keep me company. To-morrow I bury her, and then I shall be quite alone with nothing but a cat to remind me that the house has been full of living beings like myself.

My heart is quite sunk, and I don't know where to look for relief. Mary will get better again; but her constantly being liable to such relapses is dreadful; nor is it the least of our evils that her case and all our story is so well known around us. We are in a manner *marked*. Excuse my troubling you; but I have nobody by me to speak to me. I slept out last night, not being



able to endure the change and the stillness. But I did not sleep well, and I must come back to my own bed. I am going to try and get a friend to come and be with me to-morrow. I am completely shipwrecked. My head is quite bad. I almost wish that Mary were dead.

God bless you! Love to Sara and Hartley.

C. LAMB

## LXV.—TO THOMAS MANNING

May 17, 1800.

Dear Manning,— I am quite out of spirits, and feel as if I should never recover them. But why should not this pass away? I am foolish, but judge of me by my situation. Our servant is dead, and my sister is ill — so ill as to make a removal to a place of confinement absolutely necessary. I have been left *alone* in a house where but ten days since living beings were, and noises of life were heard. I have made the experiment and find I cannot bear it any longer. Last night I went to sleep at White's, with whom I am to be till I can find a settlement. I have given up my house, and must look out for lodgings.

I expect Mary will get better before many weeks are gone, — but at present I feel my daily and hourly prop has fallen from me. I totter and stagger with weakness, for nobody can supply her place to me. White has *all kindness*, but not *sympathy*. R. Lloyd, my only correspondent, you

except, is a good being, but a weak one. I know not where to look but to you. If you will suffer me to weary your shoulders with part of my burthen—I shall write again to let you know how I go on. Meantime a letter from you would be a considerable relief to me.

Believe me, yours most sincerely,

C. L.

## LXVI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

[P. M., May 20, 1800.]

Dear Manning,—I feel myself unable to thank you sufficiently for your kind letter. It was doubly acceptable to me, both for the choice poetry and the kind honest prose which it contained. It was just such a letter as I should have expected from Manning.

I am in much better spirits than when I wrote last. I have had a very eligible offer to lodge with a friend in town. He will have rooms to let at midsummer, by which time I hope my sister will be well enough to join me. It is a great object to me to live in town, where we shall be much more *private*, and to quit a house and neighbourhood where poor Mary's disorder, so frequently recurring, has made us a sort of marked people. We can be nowhere private except in the midst of London. We shall be in a family where we visit very frequently; only my landlord and I have not yet come to a con-

clusion. He has a partner to consult. I am still on the tremble, for I do not know where we could go into lodgings that would not be, in many respects, highly exceptionable. Only God send Mary well again, and I hope all will be well! The prospect, such as it is, has made me quite happy. I have just time to tell you of it, as I know it will give you pleasure. — Farewell.

C. LAMB

LXVII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

Sunday [No date. ? May 25, 1800.]

Dear Manning, — I am a letter in your debt, but I am scarcely rich enough (in spirits) to pay you. — I am writing at an inn on the Ware Road, in the neighbourhood of which I am going to pass two days, being Whitsuntide. — Excuse the pen, 't is the best I can get. — Poor Mary is very bad yet. I went yesterday hoping I should see her getting well, then I might have come into the country more chearful, but I could not get to see her. This has been a sad damp. Indeed I never in my life have been more wretched than I was all day yesterday.

I am glad I am going away from business for a little while, for my head has been hot and ill. I shall be very much alone where I am going, which always revives me. I hope you will accept of this worthless memento, which I merely

send as a token that I am in your debt. I will write upon my return, on Thursday at farthest. I return on Wednesday.

God bless you.

I was afraid you would think me forgetful, and that made me scribble this jumble.

[Mr. Dobell has a letter to Manning belonging to this period, in which Lamb returns to the subject of poverty :

“ You dropt a word whether in jest or earnest, as if you would join me in some work, such as a review or series of papers, essays, or anything. — Were you serious ? I want home occupation, and I more want money. Had you any scheme, or was it, as G. Dyer says, *en passant* ? If I don't have a legacy left me shortly I must get into pay with some newspaper for small gains. Mutton is twelpence a pound.”  
E. V. LUCAS.]

## LXVIII.—TO JOHN MATHEW GUTCH

[No date. 1800.]

Dear Gutch, — Anderson is not come home, and I am almost afraid to tell you what has happen'd, lest it should seem to have happen'd by my fault in not writing for you home sooner.

This morning Henry, the eldest lad, was missing. We suppos'd he was only gone out on a morning's stroll, and that he would return, but he did not return and we discovered that he had opened your desk before he went, and I suppose taken all the money he could find, for on diligent search I could find none, and on opening your

letter to Anderson, which I thought necessary to get at the key, I learn that you had a good deal of money there.

Several people have been here after you to-day, and the boys seem quite frightened, and do not know what to do. In particular, one gentleman wants to have some writings finished by Tuesday. For God's sake set out by the first coach. Mary has been crying all day about it, and I am now just going to some law stationer in the neighbourhood, that the eldest boy has recommended, to get him to come and be in the house for a day or so, to manage. I cannot think what detains Anderson. His sister is quite frightened about him. I am very sorry I did not write yesterday, but Henry persuaded me to wait till he could ascertain when some job must be done (at the furthest) for Mr. Foulkes, and as nothing had occur'd besides I did not like to disturb your pleasure. I now see my error, and shall be heartily ashamed to see you.

*[This is as far as the letter goes on the first page. We then turn over, and find (as Gutch, to his immense relief, found before us) written right across both pages:]*

### A BITE!!!

Anderson is come home, and the wheels of thy business are going on as ever. The boy is honest, and I am thy friend.

And how does the coach-maker's daughter?

Thou art her phaeton, her gig, and her sociable.  
Commend me to Rob.

C. LAMB

*Saturday.*

NOTE

[This letter is the first example extant of Lamb's tendency to hoaxing. Gutch was at that time courting a Miss Wheeley, the daughter of a Birmingham coachbuilder. It was while he was in Birmingham that Lamb wrote the letter. Anderson was his partner in business. Rob would be Robert Lloyd, then at Birmingham again. This, and one other, are the only letters of Lamb to Gutch that escaped destruction. — E. V. LUCAS.]

LXIX.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

June 22, 1800.

By some fatality, unusual with me, I have mislaid the list of books which you want. Can you, from memory, easily supply me with another?

I confess to Statius, and I detained him wilfully, out of a reverent regard to your style. Statius, they tell me, is turgid. As to that other Latin book, since you know neither its name nor subject, your wants (I crave leave to apprehend) cannot be very urgent. Meanwhile, dream that it is one of the lost decades of Livy.

Your partiality to me has led you to form an erroneous opinion as to the measure of delight you suppose me to take in obliging. Pray, be careful that it spread no further. 'T is one of those heresies that is very pregnant. Pray, rest more satisfied with the portion of learning which



you have got, and disturb my peaceful ignorance as little as possible with such sort of commissions.

Did you never observe an appearance well known by the name of the man in the moon? Some scandalous old maids have set on foot a report that it is Endymion. Dr. Stoddart talks of going out King's Advocate to Malta. He has studied the Civil and Canon Law just three canon months, to my knowledge. *Fiat justitia, ruat coelum.*

Your theory about the first awkward step a man makes being the consequence of learning to dance is not universal. We have known many youths bred up at Christ's, who never learned to dance, yet the world imputes to them no very graceful motions. I remember there was little Hudson, the immortal precentor of St. Paul's, to teach us our quavers; but, to the best of my recollection, there was no master of motions when we were at Christ's.

Farewell, in haste.

C. L.

#### LXX. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

[July 22, 1800.]

Dear Robert, — My mind has been so barren and idle of late, that I have done nothing. I have received many a summons from you, and have repeatedly sat down to write, and broke off from despair of sending you anything worthy your acceptance. I have had such a deadness about

me. Man delights not me, nor woman neither. I impute it in part or altogether to the stupefying effect which continued fine weather has upon me. I want some rains, or even snow and intense cold winter nights, to bind me to my habitation, and make me value it as a home—a sacred character which it has not attained with me hitherto. I cannot read or write when the sun shines. I can only walk.

I must tell you, that since I wrote last I have been two days at Oxford, on a visit (long put off) to Gutch's family (my Landlord). I was much gratified with the Colleges and Libraries, and what else of Oxford I could see in so short a time. In the All Souls' Library is a fine head of Bishop Taylor, which was one great inducement to my Oxford visit. In the Bodleian are many Portraits of illustrious Dead, the only species of painting I value at a farthing. But an indubitable good Portrait of a great man is worth a pilgrimage to go and see. Gutch's family is a very fine one, consisting of well grown sons and daughters, and all likely and well favor'd. What is called a Happy family. That is, according to my interpretation, a numerous assemblage of young men and women, all fond of each other to a certain degree, and all happy together, but where the very number forbids any two of them to get close enough to each other to share secrets and *be friends*. That close intercourse can only exist (commonly, I think) in a family of two or three.

I do not envy large families. The fraternal affection by diffusion and multi-participation is ordinarily thin and weak. They don't get near enough to each other.

I expected to have had an account of Sophia's being brought to bed before this time. But I remain in confidence that you will send me the earliest news. I hope it will be happy. Coleridge is settled at Keswick, so that the probability is that he will be once again united with your brother. Such men as he and Wordsworth would exclude solitude in the Hebrides or Thule.

Pray have you seen the new Edition of Burns including his posthumous works?— I want very much to get a sight of it, but cannot afford to buy it. My Oxford journey, though very moderate, having pared away all superfluities.

Will you accept of this short letter, accompanied with professions of deepest regard for you.

Yours unalterably, C. LAMB

#### LXXI.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

[Early in August] 1800.

Dear Coleridge, — Soon after I wrote to you last, an offer was made me by Gutch (you must remember him, at Christ's; you saw him slightly one day with Thomson at our house) — to come and lodge with him, at his house in Southampton Buildings Chancery Lane. This was a very comfortable offer to me, the rooms being at a reason-

able rent, and including the use of an old servant, besides being infinitely preferable to ordinary lodgings *in our case*, as you must perceive. As Gutch knew all our story, and the perpetual liability to a recurrence in my sister's disorder, probably to the end of her life, I certainly think the offer very generous and very friendly.

I have got three rooms (including servant) under £34 a year. Here I soon found myself at home; and here in six weeks after Mary was well enough to join me. So we are once more settled. I am afraid we are not placed out of the reach of future interruptions. But I am determined to take what snatches of pleasure we can between the acts of our distressful drama. I have passed two days at Oxford on a visit, which I have long put off, to Gutch's family. The sight of the Bodleian Library and above all a fine bust of Bishop *Taylor* at All Souls', were particularly gratifying to me. Unluckily it was not a family where I could take Mary with me, and I am afraid there is something of dishonesty in any pleasures I take without *her*. She never goes anywhere. I do not know what I can add to this letter. I hope you are better by this time; and I desire to be affectionately remember'd to Sara and Hartley.

I expected before this to have had tidings of another little philosopher. Lloyd's wife is on the point of favouring the world.

Have you seen the new edition of Burns? his posthumous works and letters? I have only been

able to procure the first volume, which contains his life — very confusedly and badly written, and interspersed with dull pathological and *medical* discussions. It is written by a Dr. Currie. Do you know the well-meaning Doctor? Alas, *ne sutor ultra crepidam*; or, as some readings have it, *ne sutor ultra crepitum*, which I thus English, Let not a *sutor* presume to fart above once in the presence of his mistress.

I hope to hear again from you very soon. Godwin is gone to Ireland on a visit to Grattan. Before he went I past much time with him, and he has shew'd me particular attentions: N. B. A thing I much like! Your books are all safe: only I have not thought it necessary to fetch away your last batch, which I understand are at Johnson's, the Bookseller, who has got quite as much room, and will take as much care of them as myself — and you can send for them immediately from him.

*I wish you would advert to a Letter I sent you at Grassmere about Christabel, and comply with my request contained therein.*

Love to all friends round Skiddaw.

C. LAMB

## LXXII. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE

August 6, 1800.

Dear Coleridge, — I have taken to-day, and delivered to Longman and Co., *Imprimis*: your

books, viz., three ponderous German dictionaries, one volume (I can find no more) of German and French ditto, sundry other German books unbound, as you left them, Percy's *Ancient Poetry*, and one volume of Anderson's *Poets*. I specify them, that you may not lose any. *Secundo*: a dressing-gown (value, fivepence), in which you used to sit and look like a conjuror, when you were translating *Wallenstein*. A case of two razors and a shaving-box and strap. This it has cost me a severe struggle to part with. They are in a brown-paper parcel, which also contains sundry papers and poems, sermons, *some few epic* poems, — one about Cain and Abel, which came from Poole, &c., &c., and also your tragedy; with one or two small German books, and that drama in which Got-fader performs.

*Tertio*: a small oblong box containing *all your letters*, collected from all your waste papers, and which fill the said little box. All other waste papers, which I judged worth sending, are in the paper parcel aforesaid. But you will find *all your letters* in the box by themselves. Thus have I discharged my conscience and my lumber-room of all your property, save and except a folio entitled Tyrrell's *Bibliotheca Politica*, which you used to learn your politics out of when you wrote for the *Post*, *mutatis mutandis*, i. e., applying past inferences to modern *data*. I retain that, because I am sensible I am very deficient in the politics myself; and I have torn up — don't be angry,



waste paper has risen forty per cent., and I can't afford to buy it — all *Buonaparte's Letters*, Arthur Young's *Treatise on Corn*, and one or two more light-armed infantry, which I thought better suited the flippancy of London discussion than the dignity of Keswick thinking.

Mary says you will be in a damned passion about them when you come to miss them; but you must study philosophy. Read Albertus Magnus *de Chartis Amissis* five times over after phlebotomising, — 't is Burton's recipe, — and then be angry with an absent friend if you can.

I have just heard that Mrs. Lloyd is delivered of a fine boy, and mother and boy are doing well. Fie on sluggards, what is thy Sara doing? Sara is obscure. Am I to understand by her letter, that she sends a *kiss* to Eliza Buckingham? Pray tell your wife that a note of interrogation on the superscription of a letter is highly ungrammatical — she proposes writing my name *Lamb*? *Lambe* is quite enough.

I have had the *Anthology*, and like only one thing in it, *Lewti*; but of that the last stanza is detestable, the rest most exquisite! — the epithet *enviable* would dash the finest poem. For God's sake (I never was more serious), don't make me ridiculous any more by terming me gentle-hearted in print, or do it in better verses. It did well enough five years ago when I came to see you, and was moral coxcomb enough at the time you wrote the lines, to feed upon such epithets;

but, besides that, the meaning of gentle is equivocal at best, and almost always means poor-spirited, the very quality of gentleness is abhorrent to such vile trumpeting. My *sentiment* is long since vanished. I hope my *virtues* have done *sucking*. I can scarce think but you meant it in joke. I hope you did, for I should be ashamed to think that you could think to gratify me by such praise, fit only to be a cordial to some green-sick sonneteer.

I have hit off the following in imitation of old English poetry, which, I imagine, I am a dab at. The measure is unmeasurable; but it most resembles that beautiful ballad of the *Old and Young Courtier*; and in its feature of taking the extremes of two situations for just parallel, it resembles the old poetry certainly. If I could but stretch out the circumstances to twelve more verses, *i. e.*, if I had as much genius as the writer of that old song, I think it would be excellent. It was to follow an imitation of Burton in prose, which you have not seen. But fate "and wisest Stewart" say No.

I can send you 200 pens and six quires of paper *immediately*, if they will answer the carriage by coach. It would be foolish to pack 'em up *cum multis libris et caeteris*, — they would all spoil. I only wait your commands to coach them. I would pay five-and-forty thousand carriages to read W.'s tragedy, of which I have heard so much and seen so little — only what I saw at

Stowey. Pray give me an order in writing on Longman for *Lyrical Ballads*. I have the first volume, and, truth to tell, six shillings is a broad shot. I cram all I can in, to save a multiplying of letters — those pretty comets with swingeing tails.

I'll just crowd in God bless you!

C. LAMB

*Wednesday Night.*

### LXXIII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

[August 9, 1800.]

Dear Manning,— I suppose you have heard of Sophia Lloyd's good fortune, and paid the customary compliments to the parents. Heaven keep the new-born infant from star blasting and moon blasting, from epilepsy, marasmus, and the devil! May he live to see many days, and they good ones; some friends, and they *pretty regular correspondents!* with as much wit and wisdom as will eat their bread and cheese together under a poor roof without quarrelling! as much goodness as will earn heaven if there be such a place and deserve it if there be not, but, rather than go to bed solitary, would truckle with the meanest succubus on her bed of brimstone. Here I must leave off, my benedictory powers failing me. I could *curse* the sheet full; so much stronger is corruption than grace in the natural man!

And now, when shall I catch a glimpse of

your honest face-to-face countenance again? — your fine *dogmatical sceptical* face by punch-light? O! one glimpse of the human face, and shake of the human hand, is better than whole reams of this cold, thin correspondence; yea, of more worth than all the letters that have sweated the fingers of sensibility, from Madame Sévigné and Balzac (observe my learning!) to Sterne and Shenstone.

Coleridge is settled with his wife (with a child in her guts) and the young philosopher at Keswick, with the Wordsworths. They have contrived to spawn a new volume of lyrical ballads, which is to see the light in about a month, and causes no little excitement in the *literary world*.

George Dyer too, that good-natured heathen, is more than nine months gone with his twin volumes of ode, pastoral, sonnet, elegy, Spenserian, Horatian, Akensidish, and Masonic verse. Clio prosper the birth! it will be twelve shillings out of somebody's pocket. I find he means to exclude "personal satire," so it appears by his truly original advertisement. Well, God put it into the hearts of the English gentry to come in shoals and subscribe to his poems, for He never put a kinder heart into flesh of man than George Dyer's!

Now, farewell, for dinner is at hand and yearning guts do chide.

C. L.

## LXXIV. — TO THOMAS MANNING

August 11, 1800.

My dear fellow,— (*N.B.* mighty familiar of late!) for me to come to Cambridge now is one of G—d Almighty's Impossibilities, metaphysicians tell us Even He can work nothing which implies a contradiction. I can explain this by telling you that I am engaged to do double Duty (this hot weather!) for a man who has taken advantage of this very weather to go and cool himself in "green retreats" all the month of August.

But for you to come to London in stead! — muse upon it, revolve it, cast it about in your mind — I have a bed at your command — you shall drink Rum, Brandy, Gin, Aqua-vitæ, Usquebaugh, or Whiskey a nights; and for the after-dinner-Trick, I have 8 bottles of genuine Port, which mathematically divided gives one and one-seventh for every day you stay, provided you stay a week. Hear John Milton sing, —

Let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause.

And elsewhere, —

What neat repast shall feat us, light <sup>1</sup> and choice,  
Of Attic Taste, with wine,<sup>2</sup> whence we may rise  
To hear the Lute well touch'd, or artful voice  
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?

<sup>1</sup> We Poets generally give *light* dinners.

<sup>2</sup> No doubt the Poet here alludes to Port wine — 38 shillings the dozen.

Indeed the poets are full of this pleasing Morality, —

*Veni cito*, Domine Manning!

Think upon it. Excuse the paper; it is all I have.

C. LAMB

LXXV. — TO S. T. COLERIDGE<sup>1</sup>

Thursday, 14 August [1800].

Read on, and you'll come to the *Pens*.

My head is playing all the tunes in the world, ringing such peals! it has just finished the "merry Xt. Church Bells" and absolutely is beginning "Turn again Whittington." Buz, buz, buz, bum, bum, bum, wheeze, wheeze, wheeze, feu, feu, feu, tinky, tinky, tinky, *craunch*. I shall certainly come to be damned at last. I have been getting drunk two days running. I find my moral sense in the last stage of a consumption, my religion burning as blue and faint as the tops of evening bricks. Hell gapes, and the Devil's great guts cry "cupboard" for me. In the midst of this infernal larum, Conscience (and be damn'd to her) barking and yelping as loud as any of them.

I have sat down to read over again your Satire upon me in the *Anthology*, and I think I do begin to spy out something like beauty and design in it. I perfectly accede to all your alterations, and only desire that you had cut deeper, when your hand

<sup>1</sup> An autograph facsimile of this letter is given, in its chronological order, in the back of Vol. I.



was in. In the next edition of the *Anthology* (which Phoebus avert, and those nine other wandering maids also !) please to blot out *gentle-hearted*, and substitute drunken dog, ragged-head, seld-shaven, odd-ey'd, stuttering, or any other epithet which truly and properly belongs to the Gentleman in question. And for Charles, read Tom, or Bob, or Richard *for more delicacy*. Damn you, I was beginning to forgive you, and believe in earnest that the lugging in of my Proper name was purely unintentional on your part, when looking back for further conviction, stares me in the face, Charles Lamb of the *India House*. Now I am convinced it was all done in Malice, heaped sack-upon-sack, congregated, studied malice. You Dog ! your 141st page shall not save you. I own I was just ready to acknowledge that there is a something not unlike good poetry in that page, if you had not run into the unintelligible abstraction-fit about the manner of the Deity's making Spirits perceive his presence. God, nor created thing alive, can receive any honor from such thin, shew-box, attributes.

By the bye, where did you pick up that scandalous piece of private history about the Angel and the Duchess of Devonshire ? If it is a fiction of your own, why truly 't is a very modest one *for you*. Now I do affirm, that *Lewti* is a very beautiful Poem. I *was* in earnest when I praised it. It describes a silly species of one not the wisest of passions. *Therefore* it cannot deeply affect a dis-

enthralled mind. But such imagery, such novelty, such delicacy, and such versification, never got into an *Anthology* before. I am only sorry that the cause of all the passionate complaint is not greater than the trifling circumstance of *Lewti* being out of temper one day. In sober truth, I cannot see any great merit in the little dialogue called *Blenheim*. It is rather novel and pretty, but the thought is very obvious, and children's poor prattle, a thing of easy imitation. *Pauper vult videri et est.*

*Gualberto* certainly has considerable originality, but sadly wants finishing. It is, as it is, one of the very best in the Book. Next to *Lewti* I like the *Raven*, which has a good deal of humour. I was pleas'd to see it again, for you once sent it me, and I have lost the letter which contained it. Now I am on the subject of Anthologies, I must say I am sorry the old Pastoral way is fallen into disrepute. The Gentry, which now endite Sonnets are certainly the legitimate descendants of the ancient Shepherds. The same simpering face of description, the old family face, is visibly continued in the line. Some of their ancestors' labours are yet to be found in Allan Ramsay's and Jacob Tonson's [*six lines totally obliterated by author*] *Miscellanies*. But miscellanies decaying, and the old Pastoral way dying of mere want, their successors (driven from their paternal acres) nowadays settle and hive upon magazines, anthologies. This Race of men are uncommonly addicted to

superstition. Some of them are Idolaters and worship the Moon. Others deify qualities, as love, friendship, sensibility ; or bare accidents, as solitude, grief, and melancholy have their respective altars and temples among them, as the Heathens builded theirs to Mors, Febris, Pallororis. They all agree in ascribing a peculiar sanctity to the number FOURTEEN. One of their own Legislators affirmeth that whatever exceeds that number "encroacheth upon the province of the Elegy" — *vice versa*, whatever "Cometh short of that number abutteth upon the premises of the Epigram." I have been able to discover but few *Images* in their Temples, which like the caves of Delphos of old, are famous for giving *Echoes*. They impute a religious importance to the letter O, whether because by its roundness it is thought to typify the Moon, their principal goddess, or for its analogies to their own labours, all ending where they began ; or for whatever other high and mystical reference, I have never been able to discover ; but I observe they never begin their invocations to their gods without it, except indeed one insignificant sect among them, who use the Doric A, pronounced like Ah ! broad, instead. These boast to have restored the old Dorian mood.

Now I am on the subject of Poetry, I must announce to you, who doubtless in your remote part of the Island have not heard tidings of so great a blessing, that George Dyer hath prepared

two ponderous volumes, full of Poetry and Criticism — they impend over the Town, and are threaten'd to fall in the winter. The first volume contains every sort of Poetry, except Personal Satire (which George in his truly original prospectus renounceth for ever, whimsically foisting the intention in between the price of his book and the proposed number of subscribers — if I can, I will get you a copy of his *handbill*) ; he has tried his *vein* in every species besides, the Spenserian, Thompsonian, Masonic, and Akensidish more especially. The 2d vol. is all Criticism, wherein he demonstrates to the entire satisfaction of the literary world, in a way that must silence all reply forever, that the Pastoral was introduced by Theocritus, and polished by Virgil and Pope ; that Gray and Mason (who always hunt in couples in George's brain) have a good deal of poetical fire and true lyric genius ; that Cowley was ruined by excess of wit (a warning to all moderns) ; that Charles Lloyd, Charles Lamb, and Wm. Wordsworth in later days have struck the true chords of Poesy. O George, George, with a head uniformly wrong, and a heart uniformly right, that I had power and might equal to my wishes ; then would I call the Gentry of thy native Island, and they should come in troops, flocking at the sound of thy Prospectus-Trumpet, and crowding who shall be first to stand in thy list of subscribers. I can only put twelve shillings into thy pocket (which I will answer for them will not stick

there long) out of a pocket almost as bare as thine.

[*Six lines here are totally obliterated by author.*]

Is it not a pity so much fine writing should be erased — but to tell truth I began to scent that I was getting into that sort of style which Longinus and Dionysius Halicarn[assus] aptly call the *AFFECTED* — But I am suffering from the combined effect of two days' drunkenness, and at such times it is not very easy to think or express in a natural series. *The only* useful object of this letter is to apprise you that on *Saturday* I shall transmit the Pens by the same coach I sent the Parcel. So enquire them out. You had better write to Godwin *here*, directing your letter to be forwarded to him. I don't know his address. You know your letter must at any rate come to London first.

C. L.

## LXXVI. — TO THOMAS MANNING

August 23, 1800.

George Dyer is an Archimedes, and an Archimagus, and a Tycho Brahé, and a Corpernicus; and thou art the darling of the Nine, and midwife to their wandring babe also! We take Tea with that learned Poet and Critic on Tuesday night, at half-past five, in his neat library. The repast will be light and Attic, with criticism. If thou couldst contrive to wheel up thy dear carcase on the Monday, and after dining with us on



tripe, calves' kidneys, or whatever else the Cornucopia of St. Clare may be willing to pour out on the occasion, might we not adjourn together to the Heathen's? — thou with thy Black Backs, and I with some innocent volume of the Bell Letters, Shenstone, or the like: it would make him wash his old flannel gown (that has not been washed to my knowledge since it has been *his* — O the long Time!) with Tears of joy. Thou shouldst settle his scruples and unravel his cobwebs, and sponge off the sad stuff that weighs upon his dear wounded *Pia Mater*. Thou shouldst restore light to his eyes, and him to his friends and the public. Parnassus should shower her civic crowns upon thee for saving the wits of a citizen! I thought I saw a lucid interval in George the other night; he broke in upon my studies just at tea-time, and brought with him a Dr. Anderson, an old gentleman who ties his breeches' knees with packthread, and boasts that he has been disappointed by ministers. The Dr. wanted to see *me*; for I being a Poet, he thought I might furnish him with a copy of verses to suit his *Agricultural Magazine*. The Dr., in the course of the conversation, mentioned a poem called the *Epigoniad*, by one Wilkie, an epic poem, in which there is not one tolerable good line all through, but every incident and speech borrowed from Homer. George had been sitting inattentive, seemingly, to what was going on — hatching of negative quantities — when, suddenly, the name



of his old friend Homer stung his pericranics, and, jumping up, he begged to know where he could meet with Wilkie's works. "It was a curious fact that there should be such an Epic Poem and he not know of it; and he *must* get a copy of it, as he was going to touch pretty deeply upon the subject of the Epic; and he was sure there must be some things good in a poem of 1400 lines!" I was pleased with this transient return of his reason and recurrence to his old ways of thinking; it gave me great hopes of a recovery, which nothing but your book can completely insure. Pray come on Monday, if you can, and stay your own time. I have a good large room, with two beds in it, in the handsomest of which thou shalt repose a-nights, and dream of Spheroides.

I hope you will understand by the nonsense of this letter that I am *not* melancholy at the thoughts of thy coming: I thought it necessary to add this, because you love *precision*. Take notice that our stay at Dyer's will not exceed eight o'clock; after which our pursuits will be our own. But indeed I think a little recreation among the Bell Letters and Poetry will do you some service in the interval of severer studies. I hope we shall fully discuss with George Dyer what I have never yet heard done, to my satisfaction, — the reason of Dr. Johnson's malevolent strictures on the higher species of the Ode.

# LXXVII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

[P. M. August 24, 1800.]

Dear Manning, — I am going to ask a favour of you, and am at a loss how to do it in the most delicate manner. For this purpose I have been looking into Pliny's *Letters*, who is noted to have had the best grace in begging of all the ancients (I read him in the elegant translation of Mr. Melmoth). But not finding any case there exactly similar with mine, I am constrained to beg in my own barbarian way. To come to the point then, and hasten into the middle of things—have you a copy of your Algebra to give away? I do not ask it for myself. I have too much reverence for the Black Arts ever to approach thy Circle, illustrious Trismegist. But that worthy man and excellent Poet, George Dyer, made me a visit yesternight, on purpose to borrow one, supposing, rationally enough I must say, that you had made me a present of one before this—the omission of which I take to have proceeded only from negligence; but it is a fault. I could lend him no assistance. You must know he is just now diverted from the pursuit of the BELL LETTERS by a paradox, which he has heard his friend Frend (that learned mathematician) maintain, that the negative quantities of mathematicians were *merae nugae*, things scarcely *in rerum naturâ*, and smacking too much of mystery for gentlemen of Mr. Frend's clear Unitarian capacity. However, the

dispute once set a-going has seized violently on George's pericranic; and it is necessary for his health that he should speedily come to a resolution of his doubts. He goes about teasing his friends with his new mathematics; he even frantically talks of purchasing Manning's *Algebra*, which shews him far gone, for, to my knowledge, he has not been master of seven shillings a good time. George's pockets and ——'s brains are two things in nature which do not abhor a vacuum. Now, if you could step in, in this trembling suspense of his reason, and he should find on Saturday morning, lying for him at the Porter's Lodge, Clifford's Inn, — his safest address, — Manning's *Algebra*, with a neat manuscript in the blank leaf, running thus, FROM THE AUTHOR! — it might save his wits and restore the unhappy author to those studies of Poetry and Criticism, which are at present suspended, to the infinite regret of the whole literary world.

N. B. — Dirty books, smear'd leaves, and dogs' ears, will be rather a recommendation than otherwise.

N. B. — He must have the book as soon as possible, or nothing can withhold him from madly purchasing the book on Tick. Then, shall we see him sweetly restored to the chair of Longinus, to dictate in smooth and modest phrase the laws of verse, — to prove that Theocritus first introduced the Pastoral, and Virgil and Pope brought it to its perfection; that Gray and

Mason (who always hunt in couples in George's brain) have shewn a great deal of poetical fire in their lyric poetry ; that Aristotle's rules are not to be servilely followed, which George has shewn to have imposed great shackles upon modern genius. His poems, I find, are to consist of two vols. — reasonable octavo — and a third book will exclusively contain Criticisms, in which he asserts he has gone *pretty deeply* into the laws of blank verse and rhyme — epic poetry, dramatic and pastoral ditto — all which is to come out before Xmas. But above all he has *touched* most *deeply* upon the Drama — comparing the English with the modern German stage, their merits and defects. Apprehending that his *studies* (not to mention his *Turn*, which I take to be chiefly toward the Lyrical Poetry) hardly qualify'd him for these disquisitions, I modestly enquired what plays he had read. I found by George's reply that he *had* read Shakspeare, but that was a good while since: he calls him a great but irregular genius, which I think to be an original and just remark. (Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Ben Jonson, Shirley, Marlowe, Ford, and the worthies of Dodsley's *Collection* — he confess'd he had read none of them, but profest his *intention* of looking through them all, so as to be able to *touch* upon them in his book.)

So Shakspeare, Otway, and I believe Rowe, to whom he was naturally directed by Johnson's *Lives*, and these not read lately, are to stand him

in stead of a general knowledge of the subject.  
God bless his dear absurd head!

By the by, did I not write you a letter with something about an invitation in it? — but let that pass. I suppose it is not agreeable.

N. B. It would not be amiss if you were to accompany your *present* with a dissertation on negative quantities.

C. L.

NOTE

[“ ——’s brain.” In a later letter Lamb uses Judge Park’s wig, when his head is in it, as a simile for emptiness.]

LXXVIIa. — TO MRS. MAY

Dear Madam, — We are all the better for our pleasant last night. I send the books which I meant to have called with. With kind respects to yourself, Mrs. [? Mr.] May, and your mother,

C. LAMB

My! how hot it is!

NOTE

[No indication of date, but apparently early in the nineteenth century. Mrs. May was no doubt the wife of Southey’s friend, John May. — RICHARD GARNETT.]

## LXXVIII.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

August 26, 1800.

How do you like this little Epigram? It is not my writing, nor had I any finger in it — if you concur with me in thinking it very elegant and very original, I shall be tempted to name the author to you. I will just hint that it is almost or quite a first attempt.

### HELEN REPENTANT TOO LATE

1

High-born Helen !  
Round your dwelling  
These twenty years I've paced in vain ;  
Haughty Beauty,  
Your Lover's duty  
Has been to glory in his pain.

2

High-born Helen !  
Proudly telling  
Stories of your cold disdain,  
I starve, I die : —  
Now you comply,  
And I no longer can complain.

3

These twenty years  
I've liv'd on tears,  
Dwelling for ever on a frown ;  
On sighs I've fed,  
Your scorn my bread :  
I perish now you kind are grown.



4

Can I, who loved  
My Beloved  
But for the "scorn was in her eye" ?  
Can I be moved  
For my Beloved,  
When she returns me "sigh for sigh" ?

5

In stately pride,  
By my bedside  
High-born Helen's portrait's hung,  
Deaf to my praise ;  
My mournful lays  
Are nightly to the portrait sung.

6

To that I weep,  
Nor ever sleep,  
Complaining all night long to her.  
Helen grown old,  
No longer cold,  
Said, "*You to all men I prefer.*"

Godwin returned from Wicklow the week before last. 'Tho' he did not reach home till the Tuesday after, — he has been rambling in Wales. — He might much better have spent that time with you. — But you see your invitation would have come too late. He greatly regrets the occasion he mist of visiting you, but he intends to revisit Ireland in the next summer, and then he will certainly take Keswick in his way.

I dined with the Heathen on Sunday.

By the bye, I have a sort of recollection that

somebody, I think *you*, promis'd me a sight of Wordsworth's *Tragedy*. I should be very glad of it just now ; for I have got Manning with me and should like to read it *with him*. But this, I confess, is a refinement. Under any circumstances, alone, in Cold-Bath Prison, or in the Desart Island, just when Prospero and his crew had set off, with Caliban in a cage, to Milan, it would be a treat to me to read that play. Manning has read it, so has Lloyd, and all Lloyd's family — but I could not get him to betray his trust by giving *me* a sight of it. Lloyd is sadly deficient in some of those virtuous vices. I have just lit upon a most beautiful fiction of hell punishments by the author of *Hurlothrumbo*, a mad farce. The inventor imagines that in Hell there is a great caldron of hot water, in which a man can scarce hold his finger, and an immense sieve over it, into which the probationary souls are put

And all the *little* Souls  
Pop through the riddle-holes !

Mary's love to Mrs. Coleridge. Mine to all.  
N. B. I pays no Postage.

George Dyer is the only literary character I am happily acquainted with. The oftener I see him, the more deeply I admire him. He is goodness itself. If I could but calculate the precise date of his death, I would write a novel on purpose to make George the Hero. I could hit him off to a hair.

George brought a Dr. Anderson to see me. The Dr. is a very pleasant old man, a great genius for agriculture, one that ties his breeches-knees with Packthread, and boasts of having had disappointments from ministers. The Doctor happen'd to mention an Epic Poem by one Wilkie, call'd the *Epigoniad*, in which he assur'd us there is not one tolerable line from beginning to end, but that all the characters, incidents, &c., verbally copied from *Homer*. George, who had been sitting quite inattentive to the Doctor's criticism, no sooner heard the sound of *Homer* strike his pericranicks, than up he gets and declares he must see that Poem immediately — where was it to be had? An Epic Poem of 800 Lines, and he not hear of it! There must be some things good in it — and it was necessary he should see it — for he had touched pretty deeply upon that subject in his criticisms on the Epic. George has touched pretty deeply upon the Lyric, I find; he has also prepared a dissertation on the Drama and the comparison of the English and German theatres. As I rather doubted his competency to do the latter, knowing that his peculiar *turn* lies in the Lyric species of composition, I questioned George what English Plays he had read. I found that he *had* read Shakespeare (whom he calls an original but irregular genius), but it was a good while ago; and he has dipped into Rowe and Otway, I suppose having found their names in *Johnson's Lives* at full

length ; and upon this slender ground he has undertaken the task. He never seem'd even to have heard of Fletcher, Ford, Marlowe, Massinger, and the worthies of Dodsley's collection, but he is to read all these, to prepare him for bringing out his *Parallel* in the winter. I find he is also determin'd to vindicate Poetry from the shackles which Aristotle and some others have imposed upon it, which is very good-natured of him, and very necessary just now ! Now I am *touching* so *deeply* upon poetry, can I forget that I have just received from Cottle a magnificent copy of his *Guinea Alfred*. Four-and-twenty Books to read in the dog-days ! I got as far as the *Mad Monk* the first day and fainted. Mr. Cottle's genius strongly points him to the *Pastoral*, but his inclinations divert him perpetually from his calling. He imitates Southey, as Rowe did Shakspeare, with his "Good morrow to ye ; good master Lieutenant." Instead of *a* man, *a* woman, *a* daughter, he constantly writes one, a man, one, a woman, one, his daughter. Instead of *the* king, *the* hero, he constantly writes, he, the king, he, the hero ; two flowers of rhetoric palpably from the *Joan*. But Mr. Cottle soars a higher pitch, and when he *is* original, *it is* in a most original way indeed. His terrific scenes are indefatigable. Serpents, asps, spiders, ghosts, dead bodies, staircases made of nothing with adders' tongues for bannisters. My God, what a brain he must have ! He puts as many plums in his

pudding as my Grandmother used to do ; — and then his emerging from Hell's horrors into Light, and treading on pure flats of this earth for 23 books together !  
C. L.

#### NOTE

[The poem quoted in above letter is by Mary Lamb. The printed texts give the stanzas in four lines ; but it is printed here just as Lamb wrote it. — ED.]

### LXXIX. — TO THOMAS MANNING

September 22, 1800.

Dear Manning, — You needed not imagine any apology necessary. Your fine hare and fine birds (which just now are dangling by our kitchen blaze) discourse most eloquent music in your justification. You just nick'd my palate. For, with all due decorum and leave may it be spoken, my worship hath taken physic for his body to-day, and being low and puling, requireth to be pampered. Foh ! how beautiful and strong those buttered onions come to my nose. For you must know we extract a divine spirit of gravy from those materials, which, duly compounded with a consistence of bread and cream (y'clept bread sauce) each to each giving double grace, do mutually illustrate and set off (as skilful gold-foils to rare jewels) your partridge, pheasant, woodcock, snipe, teal, widgeon, and the other lesser daughters of the ark. My friendship, struggling

with my carnal and fleshly prudence (which suggests that a bird a man is the proper allotment in such cases), yearneth sometimes to have thee *here* to pick a wing or so. I question if your Norfolk sauces match our London culinaric.

George Dyer has introduced me to the Table of an agreeable old Gent., Dr. Anderson, who gives hot legs of mutton and grape pies at his sylvan Lodge at Isleworth — where, in the middle of a street he has shot up a wall most preposterously before his small Dwelling, which with the circumstance of his taking several panes of glass out of bedroom windows (for air) causeth his neighbours to speculate strangely on the state of the good man's Pericranics. Plainly, he lives under the reputation of being deranged. George does not mind this circumstance; he rather likes him the better for it. The Doctor in his pursuits joins agricultural to poetical science, and has set George's brains mad about the old Scotch writers, Barbour, Douglas's *Eneid*, Blind Harry, &c. We returned home in a return Postchaise (having din'd with the Doctor) and George kept wondering and wondering for eight or nine turnpike miles what was the Name and striving to recollect the name of a Poet anterior to Barbour — I begg'd to know what was remaining of his works. "There is nothing *extant* of his works, Sir, but by all accounts he seems to have been a *fine genius*!" This fine genius, without anything to show for it, or any



title beyond George's courtesy, without even a name, and Barbour, and Douglas, and Blind Harry, now are the predominant sounds in George's *Pia Mater*, and their buzzings exclude Politics, Criticism, and Algebra—the Late Lords of that illustrious Lumber-room. Mark, he has never read any of these Bucks [books]. But is impatient till he reads them *all* at the Doctor's suggestion.

Poor Dyer! his friends should be careful what sparks they let fall into such inflammable matter.

Could I have my will of the heathen, I would lock him up from all access of new ideas; I would exclude all critics that would not swear me first (upon their Virgil) that they would feed him with nothing but the old, safe, familiar notions and sounds (the rightful aborigines of his brain) Gray, Akenside, and Mason. In these sounds, reiterated as often as possible, there could be nothing painful, nothing distracting.

God bless me, here are the Birds, smoking hot.

All that is gross and unspiritual in me rises at the sight.

Avant friendship! and all memory of absent friends!

C. LAMB

#### LXXX.—TO S. T. COLERIDGE

October 9, 1800.

I suppose you have heard of the death of Amos Cottle. I paid a solemn visit of condolence to

his brother, accompany'd with George Dyer, of burlesque memory. I went, trembling to see poor Cottle so immediately upon the event. He was in black ; and his younger brother was also in black. Everything wore an aspect, suitable to the respect due to the freshly dead. For some time after our entrance, nobody spake till George modestly put in a question, whether *Alfred* was likely to sell. This was Lethe to Cottle, and his poor face, wet with tears, and his kind Eyebrighten'd up in a moment. Now I felt it was my cue to speak. I had to thank him for a present of a magnificent Copy, and had promised to send him my remarks, — the least thing I could do ; so I ventured to suggest, that I perceived a considerable improvement he had made in his first book since the state in which he first read it to me. Joseph, who till now had sat with his knees cowering in by the fire-place, wheeled about, and with great difficulty of body shifted the same round to the Corner of a table where I was sitting, and first stationing one thigh over the other, which is his sedentary mood, and placidly fixing his benevolent face right against mine, waited my observations. At that moment it came strongly into my mind, that I had got Uncle Toby before me, he looked so kind and so good. I could not say an unkind thing of *Alfred*. So I set my memory to work to recollect what was the name of Alfred's Queen, and with some adroitness recalled the well-known sound to Cottle's ears of Alswitha. At

that moment I could perceive that Cottle had forgot his brother was so lately become a blessed spirit. In the language of mathematicians the Author was as 9, the brother as 1. I felt my cue, and strong pity working at the root, I went to work, and beslabber'd *Alfred* with most unqualify'd praise, or only qualifying my praise by the occasional politic interposition of an exception taken against trivial faults, slips, and human imperfections, which, by removing the appearance of insincerity, did but in truth heighten the relish. Perhaps I might have spared that refinement, for Joseph was in a humour to hope and believe *all things*. What I said was beautifully supported, corroborated, and confirmed by the stupidity of his brother on my left hand, and by George on my right, who has an utter incapacity of comprehending that there can be anything bad in Poetry. All Poems are *good* Poems to George; all men are *fine geniuses*. So, what with my actual memory, of which I made the most, and Cottle's own helping me out, for I *really* had forgotten a good deal of *Alfred*, I made a shift to discuss the most essential parts entirely to the satisfaction of its author, who repeatedly declared that he loved nothing better than *candid* criticism. Was I a candied greyhound now for all this? or did I do right? I believe I did. The effect was luscious to my Conscience. For all the rest of the evening Amos was no more heard of, till George revived the subject by inquiring whether some

account should not be drawn up by the friends of the deceased to be inserted in Phillips's *Monthly Obituary*; adding that Amos was estimable both for his head and heart, and would have made a fine Poet if he had lived. To the expediency of this measure Cottle fully assented, but could not help adding that he always thought that the qualities of his brother's heart exceeded those of his head. I believe his brother, when living, had formed precisely the same idea of him; and I apprehend the world will assent to both judgments. I rather guess that the Brothers were poetical rivals. I judged so when I saw them together. Poor Cottle, I must leave him, after his short dream, to muse again upon his poor brother, for whom I am sure in secret he will yet shed many a tear. Now send me in return some Greta news.

C. L.

#### LXXXI.—TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

October 13, 1800.<sup>1</sup>

Dear Wordsworth, — I have not forgot your commissions. But the truth is (and why should I not confess it?), I am not plethorically abounding in cash at this present. Merit, God knows, is very little rewarded; but it does not become me to speak of myself. My motto is "contented with little, yet wishing for more." Now, the books you wish for would require some pounds, which, I am sorry to say, I have not by me; so

<sup>1</sup> Should be 1804.

I will say at once, if you will give me a draft upon your town banker for any sum you propose to lay out, I will dispose of it to the very best of my skill in choice old books, such as my own soul loveth. In fact, I have been waiting for the liquidation of a debt to enable myself to set about your commission handsomely; for it is a scurvy thing to cry, "Give me the money first," and I am the first of the family of the Lambs that have done it for many centuries; but the debt remains as it was, and my old friend that I accommodated has generously forgot it! The books which you want, I calculate at about £8. Ben Jonson is a guinea book. Beaumont and Fletcher, in folio, the right folio not now to be met with; the octavos are about £3. As to any other dramatists, I do not know where to find them, except what are in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, which are about £3 also. Massinger I never saw but at one shop, and it is now gone; but one of the editions of Dodsley contains about a fourth (the best) of his plays. Congreve, and the rest of King Charles's moralists, are cheap and accessible. The works on Ireland I will inquire after; but I fear Spenser's is not to be had apart from his poems; I never saw it. But you may depend upon my sparing no pains to furnish you as complete a library of old poets and dramatists as will be prudent to buy; for, I suppose you do not include the £20 edition of *Hamlet*, single play, which Kemble has. Marlowe's plays and poems are totally vanished; only



one edition of Dodsley retains one, and the other two of his plays: but John Ford is the man after Shakspeare. Let me know your will and pleasure soon, for I have observed, next to the pleasure of buying a bargain for one's self, is the pleasure of persuading a friend to buy it. It tickles one with the image of an imprudency, without the penalty usually annexed.

C. LAMB

LXXXII.—TO THOMAS MANNING

October 16, 1800.

Dear Manning, — Had you written one week before you did, I certainly should have obeyed your injunction; you should have seen *me* before my letter. I will explain to you my situation. There are six of us in one department. Two of us (within these four days) are confined with severe fevers; and two more, who belong to the Tower Militia, expect to have marching orders on Friday. Now six are absolutely necessary. I have already asked and obtained two young hands to supply the loss of the *Feverites*. And, with the other prospect before me, you may believe I cannot decently ask Leave of absence for myself. All I can promise (and I do promise, with the sincerity of Saint Peter, and the contrition of *Sinner* Peter if I fail) is that I will come *the very first spare week*, and go nowhere till I have been at Camb[ridge]. No matter if you are in a state



of Pupilage when I come ; for I can employ myself in Camb[ridge] very pleasantly in the mornings. Are there not Libraries, Halls, Colleges, Books, Pictures, Statues ?

I wish to God you had made London in your way. There is an exhibition quite uncommon in Europe, which could not have escaped *your genius*, — a live Rattle Snake, 10 feet in Length, and of the thickness of a big Leg. I went to see it last night by candlelight. We were usher'd into a room very little bigger than ours at Pentonville. A man and woman and four boys live in this room, joint Tenants with 9 Snakes, most of them such as no remedy has been discover'd for their bite. We walked into the middle, which is formed by a half-moon of wired Boxes, all mansions of *Snakes* — Whip-snakes, Thunder-snakes, Pignose-snakes, American Vipers, and *this monster*. He lies curled up in folds, and immediately a stranger entered (for he is used to the family, and sees them play at cards) he set up a rattle like a watchman's in London or near as loud, and reared up a head, from the midst of these folds, like a *Toad*, and shook his head, and showed every sign a snake can show of irritation. I had the foolish curiosity to strike the wires with my finger, and the devil flew at me, with his Toad-mouth wide open ; the inside of his mouth is quite white. I had got my finger away, nor could he well have bit me with his damn'd big mouth, which would have been certain death in five

minutes. But it frightened me so much, that I did not recover my voice for a minute's space. I forgot in my fear that he was secured. You would have forgot too, for 't is incredible how such a monster can be confined in small gauzy-looking wires. I dreamed of snakes in the night. I wish to heaven you could see it. He absolutely swelled with passion to the bigness of a large thigh. I could not retreat without impinging on another box ; and just behind, a little Devil not an inch from my back had got his nose out, with some difficulty and pain, quite thro' the bars ! He was soon taught better manners. All the Snakes were curious, and objects of Terror : but this monster, like Aaron's serpent, swallowed up the impression of the rest. He opened his damned mouth, when he made at me, as wide as his head was broad. I holloo'd out quite loud, and felt pains all over my body with the fright.

I have had the felicity of hearing George Dyer read out one book of the *Farmer's Boy*. I thought it rather childish. No doubt, there is originality in it (which, in your self-taught geniuses, is a most rare quality, they generally getting hold of some bad models, in a scarcity of books, and forming their taste on *them*), but no *selection*. *All* is described.

Mind, I have only heard read one book.

Yours sincerely,

Philo-snake,

C. L.

## LXXXIII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

November 3, 1800.

*Ecquid meditatur Archimedes?* What is Euclid doing? What hath happened to learned Trismegist? Doth he take it in ill part, that his Humble friend did not comply with his courteous invitation? Let it suffice, *I could not come*. Are impossibilities nothing? — be they abstractions of the intellect? — or not (rather) most sharp and mortifying realities? nuts in the Will's mouth too hard for her to crack? brick and stone walls in her way which she can by no means eat thro' ? sore lets, *impedimenta viarum*, no-thoroughfares? *racemi nimium alte pendentes?* is the phrase classic? I allude to the Grapes in Æsop, which cost the fox a strain, and gained the world an aphorism. Observe the superscription of this letter. In adapting the size of the letters which constitute *your* name and Mr. *Crisp's* name respectively, I had an eye to your different stations in life. 'T is truly curious and must be soothing to an *aristocrat*. I wonder it has never been hit on before my time. I have made an acquisition latterly of a *pleasant band*, one Rickman, to whom I was introduced by George Dyer!!! not the most flattering auspices under which one man can be introduced to another. George brings all sorts of people together, setting up a sort of Agrarian Law or common property in matter of society. But for once he has done me a great pleasure, while he was

only pursuing a principle, as *ignes fatui* may light you home. This Rickman lives in our Buildings, immediately opposite our house, — the finest fellow to drop in a' nights, about nine or ten o'clock — cold bread-and-cheese time — just in the *wish-ing* time of the night when you *wish* for somebody to come in, without a distinct idea of a probable anybody. Just in the nick, neither too early to be tedious, nor too late to sit a reasonable time. He is a most pleasant hand ; a fine rattling fellow, has gone through life laughing at solemn apes ; — himself hugely literate, oppressively full of information in all stuff of conversation, from matter of fact to Xenophon and Plato — can talk Greek with Porson, politics with Thelwall, conjecture with George Dyer, nonsense with me, and anything with anybody ; a great farmer, somewhat concerned in an agricultural magazine ; reads no poetry but Shakspeare ; very intimate with Southey, but does not always [read] his poetry ; relishes George Dyer ; thoroughly penetrates into the ridiculous wherever found ; understands the *first time* (a great desideratum in common minds) — you need never twice speak to him. Does not want explanations, translations, limitations, as Professor Godwin does when you make an assertion ; *up* to anything ; *down* to everything ; whatever *sapit hominem*. A perfect *man*. All this farrago, which must perplex you to read, and has put me to a little trouble to *select* !! only proves how impossible it is to de-

scribe a *pleasant band*. You must see Rickman to know him, for he is a *species* in one; a new class; an exotic; any slip of which I am proud to put in my garden-pot; the clearest headed fellow; fullest of matter, with least verbosity. If there be any alloy in my fortune to have met with such a man, it is that he commonly divides his time between town and country, having some foolish family ties at Christchurch, by which means he can only gladden our London hemisphere with *returns* of light. He is now going for 6 weeks.

At last I have written to Kemble, to know the event of my play, which was presented last Christmas. As I suspected came an answer back, that the copy was lost and could not be found — no hint that anybody had to this day ever looked into it — with a courteous (reasonable !) request of another copy (if I had one by me), and a promise of a definitive answer in a week. I could not resist so facile and moderate [a] demand; so scribbled out another, omitting sundry things, such as the witch story, about half of the forest scene (which is too leisurely for *story*), and transposing that damned soliloquy about England getting drunk, which, like its reciter, stupidly stood *alone*, nothing prevenient or antevenient; and cleared away a good deal besides; and sent this copy, written *all out* (with alterations, &c. *requiring judgment*) in one day and a half! I sent it last night, and am in weekly

expectation of the tolling bell and death-warrant.

This is all my Lunnion news. Send me some from the *Banks of Cam*, as the Poets delight to speak, especially George Dyer, who has no other name nor idea nor definition of Cambridge; namely, its being a market town, sending members to Parliament, never entered into his definition. It was and is, simply the banks of the Cam, or the fair Cam, as Oxford is the banks of the Isis, or the fair Isis.

Yours in all humility, most illustrious Trismegist,

C. LAMB

(Read on; there's more at the bottom.)

You ask me about the *Farmer's Boy*. Don't you think the fellow who wrote it (who is a shoemaker) has a poor mind? Don't you find he is always silly about *poor Giles*, and those abject kind of phrases, which mark a man that looks up to wealth? None of Burns's Poet-dignity. What do you think? I have just open'd him; but he makes me sick.

Dyer knows the shoemaker (a damn'd stupid hound in company); but George introduces and promises to introduce him indiscriminately to all his friends and all combinations.



# LXXXIV.—TO THOMAS MANNING

[November 28, 1800.]

Dear Manning, — I have received a very kind invitation from Lloyd and Sophia, to go and spend a month with them at the Lakes. Now it fortunately happens (which is so seldom the case!) that I have spare cash by me enough to answer the expenses of so long a journey; and am determined to get away from the office by some means. The purpose of this letter is to request of you (my dear friend) that you will not take it unkind, if I decline my proposed visit to Cambridge *for the present*. Perhaps I shall be able to take Cambridge *in my way*, going or coming. I need not describe to you the expectations which such an one as myself, pent up all my life in a dirty city, have formed of a tour to the *Lakes*. Consider Grasmere! Ambleside! Wordsworth! Coleridge! I hope you will. Hills, woods, lakes, and mountains, to the *Eternal Devil*. I will eat snipes with thee, Thomas Manning. Only confess, confess a *Bite*.

P. S. I think you named the 16th; but was it not modest of Lloyd to send such an invitation! It shows his knowledge of *money* and *time*. I would be loth to think he meant

Ironie satire sidelong sklentend  
On my poor pursie. — BURNS

For my part, with reverence to my friends northward, I must confess that I am not romance-bit

about *Nature*. The earth, and sea, and sky (when all is said) is but as a house to dwell in. If the inmates be courteous, and good liquors flow like the conduits at an old coronation, if they can talk sensibly, and feel properly, I have no need to stand staring upon the gilded looking-glass (that strained my friend's purse-strings in the purchase) nor his 5-shilling print, over the mantelpiece, of old Nabbs the carrier (which only betrays his false taste). Just as important to me (in a sense) is all the furniture of my world ; eye-pampering, but satisfies no heart. Streets, streets, streets, markets, theatres, churches, Covent Gardens, shops sparkling with pretty faces of industrious milliners, neat sempstresses, ladies cheapening, gentlemen behind counters lying, authors in the street with spectacles, George Dyers (you may know them by their gait), lamps lit at night, pastry-cook and silversmith shops, beautiful Quakers of Pentonville, noise of coaches, drowsy cry of mechanic watchmen at night, with Bucks reeling home drunk ; if you happen to wake at midnight, cries of " Fire ! " and " Stop thief ! " Inns of court (with their learned air and halls and butteries), just like Cambridge colleges ; old book stalls, *Jeremy Taylors*, *Burtons on Melancholy*, and *Religio Medici's* on every stall. These are thy pleasures, O London ! with—the many—sins. O City, abounding in whores, for these may Keswick and her Giant Brood go hang !

C. L.

# LXXXV.—TO WILLIAM GODWIN

Thursday Morning, [December 4, 1800.]

Dear Sir, — I send this speedily after the heels of Cooper (oh, the dainty expression!) to say that Mary is obliged to stay at home on Sunday to receive a female friend, from whom I am equally glad to escape. So that we shall be by ourselves. I write, because it may make *some* difference in your marketing, &c.

C. L.

I am sorry to put you to the expense of twopence postage. But I calculate thus: if Mary comes she will eat beef, 2 plates . 4d.

*Batter Pudding* 1 do. . 2d.

Beer, a pint . . . 2d.

Wine, 3 glasses . . . 1 1d. I drink no wine!

Chesnuts, after dinner . 2d.

Tea and supper at moderate calculation . . 9d.

---

2s. 6d.

From which deduct 2d. postage.

---

2s. 4d.

You are a clear gainer by her not coming.

## NOTE

[If the date be correct, this becomes the first extant letter proper which Lamb sent to the author of *Political Justice*.

Godwin was then forty-four years old, and had long been busy upon his tragedy *Antonio*, in which Lamb had been assisting with suggestions. In this connection we place here the following document, which, according to Lucas, belongs naturally to an earlier date, but is not harmed by its present position:]

MINUTE SENT BY C. LAMB TO WILLIAM  
GODWIN

[No date. Autumn, 1800.]

*Queries.* — Whether the best conclusion would not be a solemn judicial pleading, appointed by the king, before himself in person of Antonio as proxy for Roderigo, and Guzman for himself — the forms and ordering of it to be highly solemn and grand. For this purpose (allowing it) the king must be reserved, and not have committed his royal dignity by descending to previous conference with Antonio, but must refer from the beginning to this settlement. He must sit in dignity as a high royal arbiter. Whether this would admit of spiritual interpositions, cardinals, &c., — appeals to the Pope, and haughty rejection of his interposition by Antonio — (this merely by the way.)

The pleadings must be conducted by short speeches, replies, taunts, and bitter recriminations by Antonio, in his rough style. In the midst of the undecided cause, may not a messenger break up the proceedings by an account of Roderigo's death (no improbable or far-fetch'd event), and the whole conclude with an affecting and awful

invocation of Antonio upon Roderigo's spirit, now no longer dependent upon earthly tribunals or a froward woman's will, &c., &c.

Almanza's daughter is now free, &c.

This might be made *very affecting*. Better nothing follow after; if anything, she must step forward and resolve to take the veil. In this case, the whole story of the former nunnery *must* be omitted. But, I think, better leave the final conclusion to the imagination of the spectator. Probably the violence of confining her in a convent is not necessary; Antonio's own castle would be sufficient.

To relieve the former part of the play, could not some sensible images, some work for the eye, be introduced? A gallery of pictures, Almanza's ancestors, to which Antonio might affectingly point his sister, one by one, with anecdote, &c.

At all events, with the present want of action, the play must not extend above four acts, unless it is quite new modell'd. The proposed alterations might all be effected in a few weeks.

Solemn judicial pleadings always go off well, as in *Henry VIII*, *Merchant of Venice*, and perhaps *Othello*.

#### NOTE

[Lamb, said Mr. Paul, writing of this critical Minute, was so genuinely kind and even affectionate in his criticism that Godwin did not perceive his real disapproval.

Mr. Swinburne, writing in *The Athenæum* for May 13, 1876, made an interesting comment upon one of Lamb's suggestions in the foregoing document. It contains, he remarks,

“a singular anticipation of one of the most famous passages in the work of the greatest master of our own age, the scene of the portraits in ‘Hernani:’ ‘To relieve the former part of the play, could not some sensible images, some work for the eye, be introduced? *A gallery of pictures, Alexander’s ancestors, to which Antonio might affectingly point his sister, one by one, with anecdote, &c.*’ I know of no coincidence more pleasantly and strangely notable than this between the gentle genius of the loveliest among English essayists and the tragic invention of the loftiest among French poets.” — E. V. LUCAS.]

## LXXXVI. — TO WILLIAM GODWIN

Wednesday Morning, December 10, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I expected a good deal of pleasure from your company to-morrow, but I am sorry I must beg of you to excuse me. I have been confined ever since I saw you with one of the severest colds I ever experienced, occasioned by being in the night air on Sunday, and on the following day, very foolishly. I am neither in health nor spirits to meet company. I hope and trust I shall get out on Saturday night. You will add to your many favours, by transmitting to me as early as possible as many tickets as conveniently you can spare. Yours truly,

C. L.

I have been plotting how to abridge the Epilogue. But I cannot see that any lines can be spared, retaining the connection, except these two, which are better out, —

Why should I instance, &c.,  
The sick man’s purpose, &c.,



and then the following line must run thus, —

The truth by an example best is shown.

Excuse this *important* postscript.

#### LXXXVII. — TO THOMAS MANNING

[Saturday, 4 o'clock P. M. December 13, 1800.]

I have receiv'd your letter *this moment*, not having been at the office. I have just time to scribble down the Epilogue. To your epistle I will just reply, that I will certainly come to Cambridge before January is out: I'll come *when I can*. You shall have an amended copy of my play early next week. Mary thanks you; but her handwriting is too feminine to be exposed to a Cambridge gentleman, though I endeavour to persuade her that you understand algebra, and must understand her hand.

The play *is* the man's you wot of; but for God's sake (who would not like to have so pious a *professor's* work *damn'd*) do not mention it — it is to come out in a feign'd name, as one Tobin's. I will omit the introductory lines which connect it with the Play, and give you the concluding Tale, which is the mass and bulk of the Epilogue. The *name* is *Jack INCIDENT*. It is about promise-breaking — you will see it all, if you read the *papers*.

Jack, of dramatic genius justly vain,  
Purchas'd a renter's share at Drury Lane;

A prudent man in every other matter,  
 Known at his club-room for an honest hatter;  
 Humane and courteous, led a civil life,  
 And has been seldom known to beat his wife;  
 But Jack is now grown quite another man,  
 Frequents the green-room, knows the plot and plan  
 Of each new piece,  
 And has been seen to talk with Sheridan!  
 In at the play-house just at six he pops,  
 And never quits it till the curtain drops,  
 Is never absent on the *author's night*,  
 Knows actresses and actors too — by sight;  
 So humble, that with Suett he'll confer,  
 Or take a pipe with plain Jack Banister;  
 Nay, with an author has been known so free,  
 He once suggested a catastrophe —  
 In short, John dabbled till his head was turn'd;  
 His wife remonstrated, his neighbours mourn'd,  
 His customers were dropping off apace,  
 And Jack's affairs began to wear a piteous face.  
 One night his wife began a curtain lecture;  
 "My dearest Johnny, husband, spouse, protector,  
 Take pity on your helpless babes and me,  
 Save us from ruin, you from bankruptcy —  
 Look to your business, leave these cursed plays,  
 And try again your old industrious ways."  
 Jack who was always scared at the *Gazette*,  
 And had some bits of scull uninjur'd yet,  
 Promis'd amendment, vow'd his wife spake reason,  
 "He would not see another Play that season —"  
 Three stubborn fortnights Jack his promise kept,  
 Was late and early in his shop, eat, slept,  
 And walk'd and talk'd, like ordinary men;  
 No *wit*, but John the hatter once again —  
 Visits his club: when lo! one *fatal night*  
 His wife with horror view'd the well-known sight —  
 John's *bat*, *wig*, *snuff-box* — well she knew his tricks —  
 And Jack decamping at the hour of six.  
 Just at the counter's edge a playbill lay,

Announcing that *Pizarro* was the play —  
 “ O Johnny, Johnny, this is your old doing.”  
 Quoth Jack, “ Why what the devil storm ’s a-brewing ?  
 About a harmless Play why all this fright ?  
 I ’ll go and see it if it ’s but for spite —  
 Zounds, woman ! *Nelson* ’s<sup>1</sup> to be there to-night.”

<sup>1</sup> A good clap-trap. Nelson has exhibited two or three times at both theatres — and advertised himself.

*Turn over* when you have read this.

*N. B.* — This was intended for Jack Banister to speak ; but the sage managers have chosen Miss *Heard*, — except Miss Tidswell, the worst actress ever seen or *heard*. Now, I remember I have promised the loan of my play. I will lend it *instantly*, and you shall get it (’pon honour !) by this day week.

I must go and dress for the boxes ! First night ! Finding I have time, I transcribe the rest. Observe, you have read the last first ; it begins thus : — the names I took from a little outline *G.* gave me. I have not read the play.

Ladies, ye ’ve seen how Guzman’s consort died,  
 Poor victim of a Spaniard brother’s pride,  
 When Spanish honour through the world was blown,  
 And Spanish beauty for the best was known.<sup>2</sup>  
 In that romantic, unenlighten’d time,  
 A *breach of promise* <sup>3</sup> was a sort of crime —  
 Which of you handsome English ladies here,  
 But deems the penance bloody and severe ?  
 A whimsical old Saragossa <sup>4</sup> fashion,  
 That a dead father’s dying inclination,  
 Should *live* to thwart a living daughter’s passion,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Four *easy* lines.

<sup>3</sup> For which the *heroine* died.

<sup>4</sup> In *Spain* ! !

<sup>5</sup> Two *neat* lines.

Unjustly on the sex *we*<sup>1</sup> men exclaim,  
 Rail at *your*<sup>2</sup> vices, — and commit the same ; —  
 Man is a promise-breaker from the womb,  
 And goes a promise-breaker to the tomb —  
 What need we instance here the lover's vow,  
 The sick man's purpose, or the great man's bow ?<sup>3</sup>  
 The truth by few examples best is shewn —  
 Instead of many which are better known,  
 Take poor *Jack Incident*, that 's dead and gone.  
 Jack, &c. &c. &c.

<sup>1</sup> Or *you*.      <sup>2</sup> Or *our*, as *they* have altered it.      <sup>3</sup> Antithesis.

Now you have it all — how do you like it ?  
 I am going to hear it recited !!!      C. L.

Don't spill the cream upon this letter.

# LXXXVIII. — TO WILLIAM GODWIN

Late o' Sunday, December 14, 1800.

Dear Sir, — I have performed my office in a slovenly way, but judge for me. I sat down at 6 o'clock, and never left reading (and I read out to Mary) your play till 10. In this sitting I noted down lines as they occurred, exactly as you will read my rough paper. Do not be frightened at the bulk of my remarks, for they are almost all upon single lines, which, put together, do not amount to a hundred, and many of them merely verbal. I had but one object in view, abridgment for compression's sake. I have used a dogmatical language (which is truly ludicrous when the trivial nature of my remarks is considered), and, remember, my office was to hunt out faults. You

may fairly abridge one half of them, as a fair deduction for the infirmities of error, and a single reading, which leaves only fifty objections, most of them merely against words, on no short play. Remember, you constituted me executioner, and a hangman has been seldom seen to be ashamed of his profession before Master Sheriff. We'll talk of the beauties (of which I am more than ever sure) when we meet. Yours truly,

C. L.

I will barely add, as you are on the very point of printing, that in my opinion neither prologue nor epilogue should accompany the play. It can only serve to remind your readers of its fate. *Both* suppose an audience, and, that jest being gone, must convert into burlesque. Nor would I (but therein custom and decorum must be a law) print the actors' names. Some things must be kept out of sight.

I have done, and I have but a few square inches of paper to fill up. I am emboldened by a little jorum of punch (vastly good) to say that next to *one man*, I am the most hurt at our ill success. The breast of Hecuba, where she did suckle Hector, looked not to be more lovely than Marshal's forehead when it spit forth sweat, at Critic-swords contending. I remember two honest lines by Marvel (whose poems by the way I am just going to possess), —

Where every mower's wholesome heat  
Smells like an Alexander's sweat.

# LXXXIX.—TO THOMAS MANNING

December 16, 1800.

We are damn'd !

Not the facetious Epilogue itself could save us. For, as the Editor of the *Morning Post* (quick-sighted Gentleman !) hath this morning truly observed (I beg pardon if I falsify his *words* ; their profound *sense* I am sure I retain), both prologue and epilogue were worthy of accompanying such a piece ; and indeed (mark the profundity, Mister Manning) were receiv'd with proper indignation by such of the audience only, as thought either worth attending to. Professor, thy glories wax dim. Again, the incomparable author of the *True Briton* declareth in *his* paper (bearing same date) that the Epilogue was an indifferent attempt at humour and character, and failed in both. I forbear to mention the other papers, because I have not read them. O Professor, how different thy feelings now (*quantum mutatus ab illo professore, qui in agris philosophiae tantas victorias acquisivisti*) — how different thy proud feelings but one little week ago — thy anticipation of thy nine nights — those visionary claps, which have soothed thy soul by day and thy dreams by night !

Calling in accidentally on the Professor while he was out, I was usher'd into the study ; and my nose quickly (most sagacious always) pointed me to four Tokens lying loose upon thy Table, Professor, which indicated thy violent and Satanical



Pride of heart. *Imprimis*, there caught mine eye a list of six persons, thy friends, whom thou didst meditate inviting to a sumpt[u]ous dinner on the Thursday, anticipating the profits of thy Saturday's play to answer charges; I was in the honour'd file! Next, a stronger evidence of thy violent and almost Satanical pride, lay a List of all the morning papers (from the *Morning Chronicle* downwards to the *Porcupine*) with the places of their respective offices, where thou wast meditating to insert, and did[st] insert, an elaborate sketch of the story of thy Play; stones in thy Enemy's hand to bruise thee with, and severely wast thou bruised, O Professor! nor do I know what oil to pour into thy wounds. Next (which convinced me, to a dead conviction, of thy pride, violent and almost Satanical pride!) lay a list of Books, which thy untragedy-favour'd pocket could never answer, Dodsley's *Old Plays*, Malone's *Shakspeare* (still harping upon thy Play, thy Philosophy abandoned meanwhile to Christians and superstitious minds) nay I believe (if I can believe my memory) that the ambitious *Encyclopædia* itself was part of thy meditated acquisitions, but many a playbook was there; all these visions are *damned*; and thou, Professor, must read *Shakspeare* in future out of a common Edition; and, hark ye! pray read him to a little better purpose. Last and strongest against thee (in colours manifest as the Hand upon Belshazzar's wall) lay a volume of poems by C. Lloyd and C. Lamb. Thy heart misgave

thee, that thy assistant might possibly not have talent enough to furnish thee an Epilogue! Manning, all these Things come over my mind; all the gratulations that would have thickened upon him, and even some have glanced aside upon his humble friend; the vanity, and the fame, and the profits (the Professor is £500 ideal money out of pocket by this failure, besides £200 he would have got for the copyright, and the Professor is never much beforehand with the world; what he gets is all by the sweat of his brow and dint of brain, for the Professor, though a sure man, is also a slow); and now to muse upon thy alter'd physiognomy, thy pale and squalid appearance (a kind of *blue sickness* about the eyelids) and thy crest fallen, and thy proud demand of £200 from thy bookseller changed to an uncertainty of his taking it [at] all, or giving thee full £50. The Professor has won my heart by this *his* mournful catastrophe.

You remember Marshall, who dined with him at my house; I met him in the lobby immediately after the damnation of the Professor's play, and he looked to me like an angel; his face was lengthen'd and all over sweat. I never saw such a care-fraught visage; I could have hugg'd him, I loved him so intensely. "From every pore of him a Perfume fell." I have seen that man in many situations, and from my soul I think that a more god-like honest soul exists not in this world. The Professor's poor nerves trembling

with the recent shock, he hurried him away to my house to supper, and there we comforted him as well as we could. He came to consult me about a change of catastrophe ; but alas ! the piece was condemned long before that crisis. I at first humour'd him with a specious proposition, but have since join'd his true friends in advising him to give it up. He did it with a pang, and is to print it as *bis*. L.

#### XC. — TO THOMAS MANNING

[December 27, 1800.]

At length George Dyer's Phrenesis has come to a crisis ; he is raging and furiously mad. I waited upon the Heathen Thursday was a se'n-night. The first symptom which struck my eye, and gave me incontrovertible proof of the fatal truth, was a pair of Nankeen Pantaloons four times too big for him, which the said Heathen did pertinaciously affirm to be new.

They were absolutely ingrained with the accumulated dirt of ages. But he affirmed them to be clean. He was going to visit a Lady that was nice about those things, and that 's the reason he wore nankeen that day. And then he danced, and capered, and fidgeted, and pulled up his pantaloons, and hugged his intolerable flannel vestment closer about his poetic Loins. Anon he gave it loose to the Zephyrs which plentifully insinuate their tiny bodies thro' every crevice, door, window, or wain-

scoat, expressly formed for the exclusion of such Impertinents. Then he caught at a proof sheet, and caught up a laundresse's bill instead, made a dart at Bloomfield's *poems*, and threw them in agony aside. I could not bring him to one direct reply; he could not maintain his jumping mind in a right line for the tithe of a moment by Clifford's Inn Clock — he must go to the Printer's immediately — the most unlucky accident! — he had struck off five hundred impressions of his *Poems*, which were ready for delivery to subscribers — and the Preface must all be expunged. There were 80 Pages of Preface, and not till that morning he had discovered that in the very first page of said preface he had set out with a principle of criticism fundamentally wrong, which vitiated all his following reasoning — The preface must be expunged, altho' it cost him £30, the lowest calculation, taking in paper and printing. In vain have his real friends remonstrated against this Midsummer madness — George is as obstinate as a primitive Xtian — and wards and parrys [*sic*] off all our thrusts with one unanswerable fence — “Sir, it's of great consequence that the world is not *mislead* [*sic*]!”

As for the other Professor, he has actually begun to dive into Tavernier and Chardin's *Persian Travels* for a story, to form a new drama for the sweet tooth of this fastidious age. Has not Bethlehem College a fair action for non-residence against such professors? Are Poets so *few* in this

age, that *He* must write Poetry? Is *morals* a subject so exhausted, that he must quit that line? Is the metaphysic Well (without a bottom) drained dry? If I can guess at the wicked Pride of the Professor's heart, I would take a shrewd wager that he disdains ever again to dip his pen in *Prose*. Adieu, ye splendid theories! Farewell, dreams of Political Justice! Lawsuits, where I was counsel for Archbishop Fenelon *versus* my own mother in the famous fire cause!

Vanish from my mind, professors, one and all! I have metal more attractive on foot.

Man of many snipes, — I will sup with thee (*Deo volente, et diabolo nolente*) on Monday night, the 5th of January, in the new year, and crush a cup to the Infant Century.

A word or two of my Progress: Embark at six o'clock in the morning, with a fresh gale, on a Cambridge one-decker; very cold till eight at night; land at St. Mary's light-house, muffins and coffee upon Table (or any other curious production of Turkey, or both Indies), snipes exactly at nine, Punch to commence at ten, *with argument*; difference of opinion is expected to take place about eleven; perfect unanimity, with some haziness and dimness, before twelve. — N. B. My single affection is not so singly wedded to Snipes; but the curious and Epicurean Eye would also take a pleasure in beholding a delicate and well-chosen assortment of Teals, Ortolans, the unctious (*sic*) and palate-soothing flesh of geese, wild

and tame, nightingales' brains, the sensorium of a young sucking pig, or any other Xmas dish, which I leave to the judgment of you and the Cook of Gonville.

C. LAMB

XCI.—TO THOMAS MANNING

[Middle December, 1800.]

I send you all of Coleridge's letters to me, which I have preserved: some of them are upon the subject of my play. I also send you Kemble's two letters, and the prompter's courteous epistle, with a curious critique on *Pride's Cure*, by a young physician from Edinbro', who modestly suggests quite another kind of a plot. These are monuments of my disappointment which I like to preserve.

In Coleridge's letters you will find a good deal of amusement, to see genuine talent struggling against a pompous display of it. I also send you the Professor's letter to me (careful Professor! to conceal his *name* even from his correspondent), ere yet the Professor's pride was cured. Oh monstrous and almost satanical pride!

You will carefully keep all (except the Scotch Doctor's, *which burn*) *in statu quo*, till I come to claim mine own.

C. LAMB

For Mister Manning, Teacher of Mathematics



and the Black Arts. There is another letter in the inside cover of the book opposite the blank leaf that *was*.

Mind this goes for a letter. (Acknowledge it *directly*, if only in ten words.)

Dear Manning, — (I shall want to hear this comes safe.) I have scratched out a good deal, as you will see. Generally, what I have rejected was either *false* in *feeling*, or a violation of character — mostly of the first sort. I will here just instance in the concluding few lines of the *Dying Lover's Story*, which completely contradicted his character of *silent* and *unreproachful*. I hesitated a good deal what copy to send you, and at last resolved to send the worst, because you are familiar with it, and can make it out; and a stranger would find so much difficulty in doing it, that it would give him more pain than pleasure.

This is compounded precisely of the two persons' hands you requested it should be.

Yours sincerely,

C. LAMB

## XCII. — TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[P. M., January 30, 1801.]

Thanks for your letter and present. I had already borrowed your second volume. What most please me are, the *Song of Lucy*. . . . *Si-*

*mon's sickly daughter* in the *Sexton* made me cry. Next to these are the description of the continuous echoes in the story of *Joanna's Laugh*, where the mountains and all the scenery absolutely seem alive; and that fine Shakesperian character of the "happy man," in the *Brothers*, —

that creeps about the fields,  
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring  
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles  
Into his face, *until the setting sun*  
*Write Fool upon his forehead.*

I will mention one more: the delicate and curious feeling in the wish for the *Cumberland beggar*, that he may have about him the melody of birds, altho' he hear them not. Here the mind knowingly passes a fiction upon herself, first substituting her own feelings for the beggar's, and, in the same breath detecting the fallacy, will not part with the wish. The *Poet's Epitaph* is disfigured, to my taste by the vulgar satire upon parsons and lawyers in the beginning, and the coarse epithet of pin point in the sixth stanza. All the rest is eminently good, and your own.

I will just add that it appears to me a fault in the *Beggar*, that the instructions conveyed in it are too direct and like a lecture: they don't slide into the mind of the reader, while he is imagining no such matter. An intelligent reader finds a sort of insult in being told, I will teach you how to think upon this subject. This fault, if I am right, is in a ten-thousandth worse degree to be

found in Sterne and many, many novelists and modern poets, who continually put a sign-post up to shew where you are to feel. They set out with assuming their readers to be stupid. Very different from *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Roderick Random*, and other beautiful bare narratives. There is implied an unwritten compact between author and reader : I will tell you a story, and I suppose you will understand it. Modern novels, *St. Leons* and the like : are full of such flowers as these : " Let not my reader suppose," " Imagine, *if you can*" — modest ! &c. I will here have done with praise and blame. I have written so much, only that you may not think I have passed over your book without observation.

I am sorry that Coleridge has christened his *Ancient Marinere*, a *Poet's Reverie*, it is as bad as Bottom the Weaver's declaration that he is not a lion but only the scenical representation of a lion. What new idea is gained by this title but one subversive of all credit, which the tale should force upon us, of its truth ? For me, I was never so affected with any human tale. After first reading it, I was totally possessed with it for many days. I dislike all the miraculous part of it, but the feelings of the man under the operation of such scenery dragged me along like Tom Piper's magic whistle. I totally differ from your idea that the *Marinere* should have had a character and profession. This is a Beauty in *Gulliver's*

*Travels*, where the mind is kept in a placid state of little wonderments ; but the Ancient Marinere undergoes such trials, as overwhelm and bury all individuality or memory of what he was, like the state of a man in a bad dream, one terrible peculiarity of which is, that all consciousness of personality is gone.

Your other observation is I think as well a little unfounded : the Marinere from being conversant in supernatural events *has* acquired a supernatural and strange cast of *phrase*, eye, appearance, &c., which frighten the wedding guest. You will excuse my remarks, because I am hurt and vexed that you should think it necessary, with a prose apology, to open the eyes of dead men that cannot see.

To sum up a general opinion of the second volume, I do not feel any one poem in it so forcibly as the *Ancient Marinere*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Lines at Tintern Abbey* in the first. I could, too, have wished the Critical Preface had appeared in a separate treatise. All its dogmas are true and just, and most of them new, *as* criticism. But they associate a *diminishing* idea with the poems which follow, as having been written for *experiment* on the public taste, more than having sprung (as they must have done) from living and daily circumstances. I am prolix, because I am gratified in the opportunity of writing to you, and I don't well know when to leave off.

I ought before this to have reply'd to your very kind invitation into Cumberland. With you and your sister I could gang anywhere. But I am afraid whether I shall ever be able to afford so desperate a journey. Separate from the pleasure of your company, I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen and customers, coaches, waggons, playhouses, all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden, the very women of the town, the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles, — life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night, the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street, the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print shops, the old book-stalls, parsons cheap'ning books, coffee houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes, London itself a pantomime and a masquerade, — all these things work themselves into my mind and feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life. — All these emotions must be strange to you. So are your rural emotions to me. But consider, what must I have been doing all my



life, not to have lent great portions of my heart with usury to such scenes?

My attachments are all local, purely local. I have no passion (or have had none since I was in love, and then it was the spurious engendering of poetry and books) to groves and valleys. The rooms where I was born, the furniture which has been before my eyes all my life, a book-case which has followed me about (like a faithful dog, only exceeding him in knowledge) wherever I have moved — old chairs, old tables, streets, squares, where I have sunned myself, my old school, — these are my mistresses. Have I not enough, without your mountains? I do not envy you. I should pity you, did I not know that the Mind will make friends of anything. Your sun and moon and skies and hills and lakes affect me no more, or scarcely come to me in more venerable characters, than as a gilded room with tapestry and tapers, where I might live with handsome visible objects. I consider the clouds above me but as a roof, beautifully painted, but unable to satisfy the mind, and at last, like the pictures of the apartment of a connoisseur, unable to afford him any longer a pleasure. So fading upon me, from disuse, have been the “*Beauties of Nature*,” as they have been confinedly called; so ever fresh and green and warm are all the inventions of men and assemblies of men in this great city. I should certainly have laughed with dear Joanna.



Give my kindest love, *and my sister's*, to Dorothy and yourself and a kiss from me to little Barbara Lewthwaite.

C. LAMB

Thank you for liking my play !!

NOTE

[This is the first — and perhaps the finest — letter from Lamb to Wordsworth that has been preserved. Wordsworth, then living with his sister Dorothy at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, was nearly thirty-one years of age; Lamb was nearly twenty-six. — E. V. LUCAS.]

XCIH. — TO ROBERT LLOYD

February 7, 1801.

Dear Robert, — I shall expect you to bring me a brimful account of the pleasure which Walton has given you, when you come to town. It must square with your mind. The delightful innocence and healthfulness of the Angler's mind will have blown upon yours like a Zephyr. Don't you already feel your spirit *filled* with the scenes? — the banks of rivers — the cowslip beds — the pastoral scenes — the neat alehouses — the hostesses and milkmaids; as far exceeding Virgil and Pope, as the *Holy Living* is beyond Thomas à Kempis. Are not the eating and drinking joys painted to the life? do they not inspire you with an immortal hunger? Are not you ambitious of being made an Angler? What edition have you got? is it Hawkins's with plates of Piscator &c.?

That sells very dear. I have only been able to purchase the last edition, without the old plates, which pleased my childhood;— the plates being worn out, and the old edition difficult and expensive to procure.— The *Complete Angler* is the only Treatise written in Dialogue, that is worth a half-penny.— Many elegant dialogues have been written (such as Bishop Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*) but in all of them the Interlocutors are merely abstract arguments personify'd; not living dramatic characters, as in Walton; where *everything* is *alive*, the fishes are absolutely *charactered*, and birds and animals are as interesting as men and women.

I need not be at much pains to get the *Holy Livings* — We can procure them in ten minutes search at any stall or shop in London. By your engaging one for Priscilla, it should seem *she* will be in town. Is that the case? — I thought she was fix'd at the Lakes. I perfectly understand the nature of your solitariness at Birmingham — and wish I could divide myself, “like a bribed haunch” between London and it. But courage! — You will soon be emancipated and (it may be) have a frequent power of visiting this great place. Let them talk of lakes and mountains and romantic dales all that fantastic stuff; — give me a ramble by night, in the winter nights in London — the lamps lit — the pavements of the motley Strand crowded with to-and-fro passengers — the shops all brilliant, and stuffed with obliging cus-

tomers and obliged tradesmen. Give me the old bookstalls of London — a walk in the bright piazzas of Covent Garden. I defy a man to be dull in such places — perfect Mahometan paradises upon earth. I have lent out my heart with usury to such scenes, from my childhood up — and have cried with fulness of joy at the multitudinous scenes of life in the crowded streets of ever dear London. I wish you could fix here. I don't know if you quite comprehend my low urban taste ; but depend upon it that a man of any feeling will have given his heart and his love in childhood and in boyhood to any scenes where he has been bred, as well to dirty streets (and smoky walls as they are called) as to green lanes where live nibbling sheep, and to the everlasting hills and the lakes and ocean. A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep ; and a crowd of happy faces justling into the playhouse at the hour of six is a more beautiful spectacle to man than the shepherd driving his "silly" sheep to fold.

Come to London and learn to sympathize with my unrural notions. Wordsworth has published a second volume, *Lyrical Ballads*. Most of them very good — but not so good as first volume. What more can I tell you ? I believe I told you I have been to see *Manning*. He is a dainty chiel, a man of great power, an enchanter almost : far beyond Coleridge or any man in power of impressing. When he gets you alone, he can act the wonders of Egypt. Only he is lazy and does not

always put forth all his strength ; if he did, I know no man of genius at all comparable to him.

Yours as ever,

C. L.

#### XCIV.—TO THOMAS MANNING

February 15, 1801.

I had need be cautious henceforward what opinion I give of the *Lyrical Ballads*. All the North of England are in a turmoil. Cumberland and Westmoreland have already declared a state of war. I lately received from Wordsworth a copy of the second volume, accompanied by an acknowledgment of having received from me many months since a copy of a certain tragedy, with excuses for not having made any acknowledgment sooner, it being owing to an "almost insurmountable aversion from letter-writing." This letter I answered in due form and time, and enumerated several of the passages which had most affected me, adding, unfortunately, that no single piece had moved me so forcibly as the *Ancient Mariner*, *The Mad Mother*, or the *Lines at Tintern Abbey*. The post did not sleep a moment. I received almost instantaneously a long letter of four sweating pages from my reluctant letter-writer, the purport of which was, that he was sorry his second volume had not given me more pleasure (devil a hint did I give that it had *not pleased me*), and "was compelled to wish that

my range of sensibility was more extended, being obliged to believe that I should receive large influxes of happiness and happy thoughts" (I suppose from the *L[yrical]* *B[allads]*). — With a deal of stuff about a certain Union of Tenderness and Imagination, which in the sense he used Imagination was not the characteristic of Shakespeare, but which Milton possessed in a degree far exceeding other poets: which Union, as the highest species of poetry, and chiefly deserving that name, "he was most proud to aspire to;" then illustrating the said Union by two quotations from his own second volume (which I had been so unfortunate as to miss).

1st Specimen. — A father addresses his son, —

When thou  
First camest into the world, as it befalls  
To new-born infants, thou didst sleep away  
Two days; and *blessings from thy father's tongue*  
*Then fell upon thee.*

The lines were thus undermarked, and then followed: "This passage, as combining in an extraordinary degree that Union of Imagination and Tenderness which I am speaking of, I consider as one of the best I ever wrote!"

2d Specimen. — A youth, after years of absence, revisits his native place, and thinks (as most people do) that there has been strange alteration in his absence, —

And that the rocks  
And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

You see both these are good poetry : but after one has been reading Shakspeare twenty of the best years of one's life, to have a fellow start up, and prate about some unknown quality, which Shakspeare possessed in a degree inferior to Milton and *somebody else*!! This was not to be *all* my castigation. Coleridge, who had not written to me some months before, starts up from his bed of sickness to reprove me for my hardy presumption : four long pages, equally sweaty and more tedious, came from him ; assuring me that, when the works of a man of true genius, such as W. undoubtedly was, do not please me at first sight, I should suspect the fault to lie "in me and not in them," &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. What am I to do with such people ? I certainly shall write them a very merry letter. Writing to *you*, I may say that the second volume has no such pieces as the three I enumerated. It is full of original thinking and an observing mind, but it does not often make you laugh or cry. It too artfully aims at simplicity of expression. And you sometimes doubt if simplicity be not a cover for poverty. The best piece in it I will send you, being *short*. I have grievously offended my friends in the North by declaring my undue preference ; but I need not fear you, —

She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the Springs of Dove,  
A maid whom there were few to praise  
And very few to love.



A violet, by a mossy stone,  
Half hidden from the eye.  
Fair as a star when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown ; and few could know,  
When Lucy ceased to be.  
But she is in the grave, and oh !  
The difference to me.

This is choice and genuine, and so are many, many more. But one does not like to have 'em rammed down one's throat. "Pray, take it — it's very good — let me help you — eat faster."

At length George Dyer's first volume is come to a birth. One volume of three — subscribers being *allowed* by the prospectus to pay for all at once (tho' it's very doubtful if the rest ever come to anything, this having been already some years getting out). I paid two guineas for you and myself, which entitle us to the whole. I will send you your copy, if you are in a *great hurry*. Meantime you owe me a guinea. George skipped about like a scorched pea at the receipt of so much cash. To give you a specimen of the beautiful absurdity of the notes, which defy imitation, take one: "Discrimination is not the *aim* of the present volume. It will be more strictly attended to in the next." One of the sonnets purports to have been written in Bedlam! This for a man to own! The rest are addressed to Science, Genius, Melancholy — &c. &c. — two, to the River Cam — an Ode to the Nightingale.

Another to Howard, beginning "Spirit of meek Philanthropy!" One is entitled *The Madman* — "being collected by the author from several Madhouses." It begins "Yes, yes — 't is He!" A long poetical satire is addressed to "John Disney, D.D. — his wife and daughter!!!"

Now to my own affairs. I have not taken that thing to Colman, but I have proceeded one step in the business. I have inquired his address, and am promised it in a few days. Meantime three acts and a half are finished galloping, of a Play on a Persian Story which I must father in April. But far, very far, from *Antonio* in composition. O Jephtha, Judge of Israel, what a fool I was!

C. LAMB

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<sup>1</sup> "Anoint": ironically, to beat soundly, to baste. — E. V. Lucas.



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<sup>1</sup> This poem was so called before it was transformed into *John Woodvil*. "I am to christen it *John Woodvil* simply — not *Pride's Cure*." III, 43.

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<sup>1</sup> Coleridge contributed to Southey's *Joan of Arc* lines 1-450 of Book II, with the exception of 141-143, 148-222, 266-272, and 286-291. He subsequently took out his lines, and gave them new shape as the poem, *The Destiny of Nations*.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards called *The Æolian Harp*.

<sup>3</sup> The "Dream" is *The Raven*.

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<sup>1</sup> From Hone's *Year Book* (April 30, 1831).

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<sup>1</sup> This is the poem Lamb meant by "The Last Man," according to E. V. Lucas and Canon Ainger.

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<sup>1</sup> See Coleridge's *Joan of Arc* (note).

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85	278	"	Godwin	Dec. 4, 1800
86	281	"	"	Dec. 10, 1800
87	282	"	Manning	Dec. 13, 1800
88	285	"	Godwin	Dec. 14, 1800
89	287	"	Manning	Dec. 16, 1800
90	290	"	"	Dec. 27, 1800
91	293	"	"	December, 1800
92	294	"	William Wordsworth	Jan. 30, 1801
93	300	"	Robert Lloyd	Feb. 7, 1801
94	303	"	Manning	Feb. 15, 1801

### VOLUME III

95	9	To	Manning	February, 1801
96	13	"	"	April, 1801
97	14	"	Robert Lloyd	April 16, 1801
98	19	"	Manning	April, 1801
99	20	"	Robert Lloyd	June 26, 1801
100	23	"	Godwin	June 29, 1801
101	23	"	Walter Wilson	Aug. 14, 1801
102	25	"	Manning	August, 1801
103	26	"	"	Aug. 31, 1801
104	29	"	Godwin	Sept. 9, 1801
105	32	"	John Rickman	Sept. 16, 1801
106	36	"	Godwin	Sept. 17, 1801
107	39	"	John Rickman	Oct. 9, 1801
108	41	"	"	Nov. 24, 1801
109	44	"	"	November, 1801
110	50	"	"	1801

Letter No.	Page			
111	52	To	John Rickman	1801
112	56	"	Robert Lloyd	1801
113	58	"	John Rickman	Jan. 9, 1802
114	62	"	"	Jan. 14, 1802
115	64	"	"	Jan. 18, 1802
116	65	"	"	Feb. 1, 1802
117	68	"	"	Feb. 4, 1802
118	69	"	"	Feb. 14, 1802
119	72	"	Manning	Feb. 15, 1802
120	76	"	John Rickman	April 10, 1802
121	77	"	Coleridge	Sept. 8, 1802
122	79	"	Mrs. Godwin	1802
123	80	"	Manning	Sept. 24, 1802
124	85	"	Coleridge	Oct. 9, 1802
125	90	"	"	Oct. 11, 1802
126	92	"	"	Oct. 23, 1802
127	97	"	"	Nov. 4, 1802
128	100	"	Manning	November, 1802
129	102	"	"	Feb. 19, 1803
130	106	"	"	March, 1803
131	107	"	William Wordsworth	March 5, 1803
132	115	"	Coleridge	March 20, 1803
133	118	"	"	April 13, 1803
134	120	"	Manning	May 1, 1803
135	124	"	Coleridge	May 27, 1803
136	126	Mary Lamb to	Dorothy Wordsworth,	July 9, 1803
137	130	To	John Rickman	July 16, 1803
138	131	"	"	July 27, 1803
139	134	Mary Lamb to	Sarah Stoddart,	Sept. 21, 1803
140	138	To	Godwin	Nov. 8, 1803
141	139	"	"	Nov. 10, 1803
142	142	"	Thomas Poole	Feb. 14, 1804
143	143	"	Coleridge	March, 10, 1804
144	143	Mary Lamb to	Sarah Stoddart,	March, 1804
145	146	To	Robert Lloyd	March 13, 1804
146	148	"	Coleridge	April 4, 1804
147	149	"	Thomas Poole	May 4, 1804
148	149	"	"	May 5, 1804
149	150	"	Dorothy Wordsworth	June 2, 1804
150	153	Mary Lamb to	Sarah Stoddart,	July, 1804
151	159	To	Robert Lloyd	Sept. 13, 1804

Letter No.	Page		
152	161	Mary Lamb to Mrs. Coleridge	Oct. 13, 1804
153	163	To Robert Southey	Nov. 7, 1804
154	164	" William Wordsworth	Feb. 18, 1805
155	167	" "	Feb. 19, 1805
156	169	" Manning	Feb. 23, 1805
157	172	" William Wordsworth	March 5, 1805
158	176	" "	March 21, 1805
159	177	" "	April 5, 1805
160	180	" Dorothy Wordsworth	June 14, 1805
161	183	" Manning	July 27, 1805
162	184	" W <sup>m</sup> and Dorothy Wordsworth,	Sept. 28, 1805
163	192	" William Hazlitt	Nov. 10, 1805
164	197	" Manning	Nov. 15, 1805
165	197	To William Hazlitt	Jan. 15, 1806
166	200	" John Rickman	Jan. 25, 1806
167	201	" William Wordsworth	Feb. 1, 1806
168	206	" William Hazlitt	Feb. 19, 1806
169	208	" "	February, 1806
170	209	" Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart,	March, 1806
171	214	To John Rickman	March, 1806
172	216	" William Hazlitt	March 15, 1806
173	218	" Manning	May 10, 1806
174	222	" Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart,	June 2, 1806
175	227	To William Wordsworth	June 26, 1806
176	231	Mary Lamb to Dorothy Wordsworth,	Aug. 29, 1806
177	235	" " " Coleridge	No date
178	237	To Manning	Dec. 5, 1806
179	244	" William Wordsworth	Dec. 11, 1806
180	245	" Sarah Stoddart	Dec. 11, 1806
181	246	Mary Lamb to Mrs. Clarkson	Dec. 23, 1806
182	249	To Godwin	1806
183	250	" William Wordsworth	Jan. 29, 1807
184	252	" Mr. and Mrs. Clarkson	June, 1807
185	254	Mary Lamb to Sarah Stoddart	October, 1807
186	257	To Joseph Hume	Dec. 29, 1807
187	258	" " "	Jan. 12, 1808
188	262	" The Rev. W. Hazlitt	Feb. 18, 1808
189	263	" Manning	Feb. 26, 1808
190	270	" Godwin	March 11, 1808
191	271	" Henry Crabb Robinson	March 12, 1808
192	272	" George Dyer	Dec. 5, 1808

Letter No.	Page		
193	273	To Mrs. Hazlitt	Dec. 10, 1808
194	274	Mary and Charles Lamb to Mrs. Clarkson	Dec. 10, 1808
195	277	To Robert Lloyd	Feb. 25, 1809
196	278	" Manning	March 28, 1809
197	284	" Henry Crabb Robinson	May, 1809
198	284	" Coleridge	June 7, 1809
199	289	" Charles Lloyd, Sr.	June 13, 1809
200	292	" "	June 19, 1809
201	293	" "	July 31, 1809
202	296	" Robert Lloyd	1809
203	296	" Charles Lloyd, Sr.	1809
204	298	" Coleridge	Oct. 30, 1809
205	299	" Robert Lloyd	Jan. 1, 1810
206	301	" Manning	Jan. 2, 1810
207	306	" Henry Crabb Robinson	Feb. 7, 1810
208	307	" Charles Lloyd, Sr.	March 10, 1810
209	308	" John Mathew Gutch	April 9, 1810
210	309	" Basil Montagu	July 12, 1810
211	311	" William Hazlitt	Aug. 9, 1810
212	312	" Mrs. Clarkson	Sept. 18, 1810
213	313	" William Wordsworth	Oct. 19, 1810
214	315	" Miss Wordsworth	Nov. 13, 1810
215	317	" "	Nov. 23, 1810
216	318	" William Hazlitt	Nov. 28, 1810
217	320	" Godwin	No date, 1810
218	322	" John Morgan	March 8, 1811
219	322	" William Hazlitt	Oct. 2, 1811
220	323	" Charles Lloyd, Sr.	Sept. 8, 1812
221	327	" John Dyer Collier	1812 or 1813
222	328	" John Scott	February, 1814
223	328	" William Wordsworth	Aug. 9, 1814
224	333	" Coleridge	Aug. 13, 1814

## VOLUME IV

225	9	To Coleridge	Aug. 26, 1814
226	12	" William Wordsworth	Sept. 19, 1814
227	15	" Robert Southey	Oct. 20, 1814
228	16	Mary Lamb to Barbara Betham	Nov. 2, 1814
229	21	To John Scott	Dec. 12, 1814

Letter No.	Page		
230	21	To William Wordsworth	Dec. 28, 1814
231	24	" " "	January, 1815
232	27	" Mr. Sargus	Feb. 23, 1815
233	28	" Joseph Hume	No date
234	29	" William Wordsworth	April 7, 1815
235	34	" " "	April 28, 1815
236	39	" Miss Matilda Betham	No date
237	40	" Robert Southey	May 6, 1815
238	43	" " "	Aug. 9, 1815
239	45	" William Wordsworth	Aug. 9, 1815
240	49	Mary and Charles Lamb to Sarah Hutchinson	Aug. 20, 1815
241	55	Mary Lamb to Matilda Betham	1815
242	56	To Matilda Betham	Sept. 30, 1815
243	57	" " "	No date
244	59	" William Ayrton	Oct. 4, 1815
245	59	" " "	Oct. 14, 1815
246	60	" Sarah Hutchinson	Oct. 19, 1815
247	61	" Manning	Dec. 25, 1815
248	65	" " "	Dec. 26, 1815
249	68	" William Wordsworth	April 9, 1816
250	70	" " "	April 26, 1816
251	73	" Leigh Hunt	May 13, 1816
252	74	" Matilda Betham	June 1, 1816
253	74	" H. Bodwell	July, 1816
254	76	" William Wordsworth	Sept. 23, 1816
255	81	Mary Lamb to Sarah Hutchinson	November, 1816
256	83	To Miss Betham	No date
257	84	Mary Lamb to Sarah Hutchinson	1816
258	85	To John Rickman	Dec. 30, 1816
259	88	" William Ayrton	April 18, 1817
260	89	" " "	May 12, 1817
261	91	To Barron Field	Aug. 31, 1817
262	94	" James and Louisa Kenney	October, 1817
263	98	Mary Lamb to Dorothy Wordsworth	Nov. 21, 1817
264	102	To William Ayrton	Nov. 25, 1817
265	103	" John Payne Collier	Dec. 10, 1817
266	104	" Benjamin Robert Hayden	Dec. 26, 1817
267	104	" Mrs. William Wordsworth	Feb. 18, 1818
268	111	" Charles and James Ollier	May 28, 1818
269	111	" " " "	June 18, 1818



Letter No.	Page		
270	113	To Robert Southey	Oct. 26, 1818
271	114	" Coleridge	Dec. 24, 1818
272	115	" John Chambers	1818
273	119	" W. Wordsworth	April 26, 1819
274	122	" John Rickman	May 21, 1819
275	123	" Manning	May 28, 1819
276	126	" W. Wordsworth	June 7, 1819
277	130	" Fanny Kelly	July 20, 1819
278	132	" " "	July 20, 1819
279	133	" Samuel James Arnold	No date, 1819
280	134	" Coleridge	1819
281	135	" Thomas Holcroft, Jr.	Autumn, 1819
282	135	" Joseph Cottle	Nov. 5, 1819
283	136	" " "	1819
284	138	" Dorothy Wordsworth	Nov. 25, 1819
285	141	" Coleridge	Jan. 10, 1820
286	143	" Allsop	Jan. 10, 1820
287	143	" " "	Feb. 15, 1820
288	143	" Dorothy Wordsworth	May 25, 1820
289	145	" Allsop	No date
290	145	" Joseph Cottle	May 26, 1820
291	146	" Allsop	June, 1820
292	147	" " "	July 13, 1820
293	147	" Barron Field	Aug. 16, 1820
294	149	" John Scott	Aug. 24, 1820
295	149	" Coleridge	Autumn, 1820
296	151	" Allsop	1820
297	151	" " "	No date
298	152	" Dorothy Wordsworth	Jan. 8, 1821
299	154	" Allsop	1821
300	154	" " "	1821
301	155	" Mrs. William Ayrton	Jan. 23, 1821
302	155	" Miss Humphreys	Jan. 27, 1821
303	156	" Mrs. William Ayrton	March 15, 1821
304	156	" Allsop	March 30, 1821
305	157	" Leigh Hunt	April 18, 1821
306	157	" Coleridge	May 1, 1821
307	158	" James Gillman	May 2, 1821
308	159	" John Payne Collier	May 16, 1821
309	160	" B. W. Procter	Summer, 1821
310	161	" John Taylor	June 1, 1821

Letter No.	Page		
311	162	To William Ayrton	July 17, 1821
312	162	" John Taylor	July 21, 1821
313	163	" " "	July 30, 1821
314	165	" C. A. Elton	Aug. 12, 1821
315	167	" Charles C. Clarke	Summer, 1821
316	168	" Allen Cunningham	1821
317	168	" William Ayrton	Aug. 14, 1821
318	169	" Allsop	Oct. 19, 1821
319	169	" Mr. Hessey or Mr. Taylor	Oct. 26, 1821
320	170	" William Ayrton	Oct. 27, 1821
321	170	" " "	Oct. 30, 1821
322	171	" William Hone	Nov. 9, 1821
323	172	" John Rickman	Nov. 20, 1821
324-328	172-174	Undated notes to Allsop	1821
329	174	To Coleridge	March 9, 1822
330	176	" W. Wordsworth	March 20, 1822
331	180	" Mrs. Norris	March 26, 1822
332	180	" Godwin	April 13, 1822
333	181	" W. H. Ainsworth	May 7, 1822
334	182	" Godwin	May 16, 1822
335	182	" Mrs. John Lamb	May 22, 1822
336	184	" Mary Lamb	August, 1822
337	184	" John Clare	Aug. 31, 1822
338	186	" William Ayrton	Sept. 5, 1822
339	187	" Mrs. Kenney	Sept. 11, 1822
340	188	" Barton	Sept. 11, 1822
341	190	" Barron Field	Sept. 22, 1822
342	194	" John Howard Payne	Autumn, 1822
343	195	" Barton	Oct. 9, 1822
344	197	" B. R. Haydon	Oct. 9, 1822
345	197	" John Howard Payne	No date
346	198	" " " "	Oct. 12, 1822
347	200	" B. R. Haydon	Oct. 29, 1822
348	200	" Sir Walter Scott	Oct. 29, 1822
349	201	" Thomas Robinson	Nov. 11, 1822
350	202	" John Howard Payne	Nov. 13, 1822
351	204	" John Taylor	Dec. 7, 1822
352	205	" Walter Wilson	Dec. 16, 1822
353	208	" Barton	Dec. 23, 1822
354	210	" John Howard Payne	January, 1823
355	212	" William Wordsworth	January, 1823

Letter Page  
No.

356	213	To	Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Collier	12 <sup>th</sup> Day, 1823
357	215	"	Barton	Jan. 9, 1823
358	217	"	John Howard Payne	Jan. 23, 1823
359	218	"	William Ayrton	Feb. 2, 1823
360	219	"	John Howard Payne	Feb. 9, 1823
361	220	"	Barton	Feb. 17, 1823
362	223	"	Walter Wilson	Feb. 24, 1823
363	225	"	Barton	March 11, 1823
364	227	"	William Ayrton	No date
365	227	"	Barton	April 5, 1823
366	230	"	B. W. Procter	April 13, 1823
367	232	"	Sarah Hutchinson	April 25, 1823
368	234	"	Miss Hutchinson	No date
369	234	"	Dibdin	1823
370	237	"	Barton	May 3, 1823
371	239	"	Dibdin	May 6, 1823
372	240	"	William Hone	May 19, 1823
373	241	Mary	Lamb to Mrs. Randal Norris	June 18, 1823
374	243	To	Barton	July 10, 1823
375	246	"	"	Sept. 2, 1823
376	249	"	Allsop	Sept. 6, 1823
377	249	"	"	Sept. 9, 1823
378	250	"	"	Sept. 10, 1823
379	250	"	"	Sept. 16, 1823
380	251	"	"	September, 1823
381	251	"	"	No date
382	252	"	"	No date
383	252	"	"	No date
384	252	"	Barton	Sept. 17, 1823
385	255	"	Charles Lloyd	Autumn, 1823
386	256	"	Allsop	Oct. 4, 1823
387	256	"	Rev. H. F. Cary	Oct. 14, 1823
388	256	"	Allsop	October, 1823
389	257	"	Dibdin	Oct. 28, 1823
390	258	"	Allsop	Nov. 7, 1823
391	258	"	Sarah Hazlitt	November, 1823
392	260	"	Mrs. Percy Bysshe Shelley	Nov. 12, 1823
393	261	"	Robert Southey	Nov. 21, 1823
394	263	"	Barton	Nov. 22, 1823
395	265	"	W. H. Ainsworth	Dec. 9, 1823
396	267	"	"	Dec. 29, 1823

Letter No.	Page		
397	268	To William Hone	December, 1823
398	268	" Barton	Jan. 9, 1824
399	270	" "	Jan. 23, 1824
400	273	" Charles Ollier	Jan. 27, 1824
401	274	" Barton	Feb. 25, 1824
402	276	" "	March 24, 1824
403	277	" "	Spring, 1824
404	279	" Mrs. T. Allsop	April 13, 1824
405	280	" William Hone	April, 1824
406	281	" Thomas Hardy	April 24, 1824
407	281	" Barton	May 15, 1824
408	284	" "	July 7, 1824
409	285	" W. Marter	July 19, 1824
410	286	" Dibdin	July 28, 1824
411	287	" Thomas Hood	Aug. 10, 1824
412	289	" Barton	Aug. 17, 1824
413	291	" The Rev. H. F. Cary	Aug. 19, 1824
414	292	" Barton	Sept. 30, 1824
415	294	" Mrs. John D. Collier	Nov. 2, 1824
416	295	" B. W. Procter	Nov. 11, 1824
417	297	" H. C. Robinson	Nov. 20, 1824
418	297	" Sarah Hutchinson	Nov. 25, 1824
419	299	" Leigh Hunt	November, 1824
420	302	" Barton	Dec. 1, 1824
421	306	" Alaric A. Watts	Dec. 28, 1824
422	306	" Dibdin	Jan. 11, 1825
423	307	" Allsop	Jan. 17, 1825
424	308	" Sarah Hutchinson	Jan. 20, 1825
425	310	" Vincent Novello	Jan. 25, 1825
426	310	" Dibdin	January, 1825
427	311	" "	Feb. 8, 1825
428	311	" Barton	Feb. 10, 1825
429	313	" Manning	February, 1825
430	314	" Sarah Hutchinson	March 1, 1825
431	314	" B. W. Procter	No date
432	315	" Barton	March 23, 1825
433	316	" H. C. Robinson	March 29, 1825
434	316	" W. Wordsworth	April 6, 1825
435	320	" Barton	April 6, 1825
436	321	" Miss Hutchinson	April 18, 1825
437	323	" William Hone	May 2, 1825

Letter No.	Page			
438	323	To	W. Wordsworth	May, 1825
439	325	"	Miss Norris	1825
440	326	"	Allsop	May 29, 1825
441	327	"	Charles Chambers	May, 1825
442	330	"	Coleridge	June, 1825
443	331	"	Henry Colburn	June 14, 1825
444	332	"	Coleridge	July 2, 1825
445	334	"	Barton	July 2, 1825
446	336	"	John Aitken	July 5, 1825
447	336	"	Allsop	July, 1825
449	337	"	"	July 20, 1825
448	337	"	William Hone	July 25, 1825
450	338	"	Allsop	August, 1825
451	339	"	Barton	Aug. 10, 1825
452	341	"	Robert Southey	Aug. 10, 1825
453	345	"	William Hone	Aug. 10, 1825
454	346	"	C. C. Clarke	No date
455	346	"	William Hone	Aug. 12, 1825
456	347	"	"	August, 1825
457	347	"	Allsop	No date
458	348	"	"	Sept. 9, 1825
459	348	"	"	Sept. 24, 1825
460	349	"	"	No date

## VOLUME V

461	9	To	William Hone	Sept. 30, 1825
462	9	"	William Ayrton	October, 1825
463	10	"	Allsop	Oct. 5, 1825
464	11	"	William Hone	Oct. 18, 1825
465	11	"	"	Oct. 24, 1825
466	11	"	"	Oct. 24, 1825
467	12	"	Allsop	Dec. 5, 1825
468	12	"	Manning	Dec. 10, 1825
469	13	"	Charles Ollier	December, 1825
470	13	"	"	Early 1826
471	14	"	"	January, 1826
472	14	"	"	Jan. 25, 1826
473	15	"	Mr. Hudson	Feb. 1, 1826
474	16	"	Charles Ollier	Feb. 4, 1826
475	16	"	"	1826

Letter No.	Page			
476	17	To	William Hazlitt	1826
477	17	"	Barton	Feb. 7, 1826
478	19	"	Charles Ollier	March 16, 1826
479	19	"	Barton	March 20, 1826
480	21	"	Coleridge	March 22, 1826
481	22	"	H. E. Cary	April 3, 1826
482	23	"	Charles Ollier	April, 1826
483	24	"	Vincent Novello	May 9, 1826
484	24	"	Barton	May 16, 1826
485	26	"	Coleridge	June 1, 1826
486	27	"	Louisa Holcroft	June 17, 1826
487	28	"	Dibdin	June 30, 1826
488	32	"	"	July 14, 1826
489	34	"	Edward Coleridge	July 19, 1826
490	35	"	William Wordsworth	Sept. 6, 1826
491	38	"	Dibdin	Sept. 9, 1826
492	41	"	Barton	Sept. 26, 1826
493	43	"	"	No date
494	44	"	Moxon	September, 1826
495	44	"	Barton	No date. Soon after preceding letter to Barton
496	46	"	Allsop	January, 1827
497	47	"	Henry C. Robinson	Jan. 20, 1827
498	50	"	" " "	Jan. 20, 1827
499	51	"	Allsop	Jan. 25, 1827
500	51	"	William Hone	Jan. 27, 1827
501	53	"	Henry Crabb Robinson	Jan. 29, 1827
502	53	"	" " "	January, 1827
503	54	"	Allsop	Feb. 2, 1827
504	55	"	Charles Cowden Clarke	Feb. 2, 1827
505	56	"	William Hone	Feb. 5, 1827
506	56	"	B. R. Haydon	March, 1827
507	57	"	William Hone	March 20, 1827
508	57	"	Vincent Novello	April, 1827
509	58	"	William Hone	April, 1827
510	59	"	Thomas Hood	May, 1827
511	59	"	Barton	1827
512	62	"	William Hone	May, 1827
513	63	"	" "	End of May, 1827
514	64	"	" "	June, 1827



Letter Page  
No.

515	64	To Barton	June 11, 1827
516	67	Henry Crabb Robinson	June 26, 1827
517	67	William Hone	June, 1827
518	68	" "	Early July, 1827
519	68	Moxon	July 17, 1827
520	69	P. G. Patmore	July 19, 1827
521	72	Mrs. Dillon	July 21, 1827
522	73	Mrs. Percy B. Shelley	July 25, 1827
523	75	Edward White	Aug. 1, 1827
524	76	Mrs. Basil Montagu	Summer, 1827
525	78	Sir John Stoddart	Aug. 9, 1827
526	80	William Hone	Aug. 10, 1827
527	81	Barton	Aug. 10, 1827
528	83	"	Aug. 28, 1827
529	85	William Hone	Sept. 2, 1827
530	86	P. G. Patmore	September, 1827
531	88	Dibdin	Sept. 5, 1827
532	89	"	Sept. 13, 1827
533	90	"	Sept. 18, 1827
534	91	Thomas Hood	Sept. 18, 1827
535	94	Henry Colburn	Sept. 25, 1827
536	94	Allsop	Sept. 25, 1827
537	95	Moxon	Sept. 26, 1827
538	96	Henry C. Robinson	Oct. 1, 1827
539	97	Dibdin	Oct. 2, 1827
540	97	Barron Field	Oct. 4, 1827
541	99	H. Dodwell	Oct. 7, 1827
542	103	William Hone	October, 1827
543	103	" "	October, 1827
544	105	" "	October, 1827
545	105	Thomas Hood	1827
546	105	Barton	Late 1827
547	107	"	Dec. 4, 1827
548	108	Leigh Hunt	December, 1827
549	109	William Hone	Dec. 15, 1827
550	110	Allsop	M'dle Dec. 1827
551	111	"	Dec. 20, 1827
552	111	Moxon	Dec. 22, 1827
553	112	Barton	End of 1827
554	113	Allsop	Jan. 9, 1828
555	114	Moxon	January, 1828

Letter No.	Page		
556	115	To Moxon	Feb. 18, 1828
557	115	" Charles Cowden Clarke	Feb. 25, 1828
558	118	" " "	No date
559	119	" Henry Crabb Robinson	Feb. 26, 1828
560	119	" Moxon	March 19, 1828
561	120	" the Rev. Edward Irving	April 3, 1828
562	121	" Barton	April 21, 1828
563	121	" Allsop	May 1, 1828
564	122	" William Hone	May 2, 1828
565	122	" Moxon	May 3, 1828
566	123	" Walter Wilson	May 17, 1828
567	123	" Thomas N. Talfourd	May 20, 1828
568	124	" William Wordsworth	May, 1828
569	124	" the Rev. Henry F. Cary	June 10, 1828
570	126	" B. R. Haydon	August, 1828
571	126	" John Rickman	Sept. 11, 1828
572	127	" Louisa Holcroft	Oct. 2, 1828
573	129	" John Rickman	Oct. 3, 1828
574	131	" Barton	Oct. 11, 1828
575	135	" Charles C. Clarke	October, 1828
576	136	" Vincent Novello	Nov. 6, 1828
577	139	" Laman Blanchard	Nov. 9, 1828
578	140	" Thomas Hood	Late autumn, '28
579	140	" Moxon	December, 1828
580	141	" Barton	Dec. 5, 1828
581	144	" Louisa Holcroft	Dec. 5, 1828
582	146	" Charles C. Clarke	December, 1828
583	148	" T. N. Talfourd	End of 1828
584	149	" Moxon	About 1828
585	150	" William Hone	No date
586	150	" George Dyer	January, 1829
587	151	" B. W. Procter	Jan. 19, 1829
588	154	" " "	Jan. 22, 1829
589	157	" " "	1829
590	158	" Allsop	Jan. 28, 1829
591	159	" B. W. Procter	Jan. 29, 1829
592	161	" " "	Early 1829
593	162	" " "	Feb. 2, 1829
594	163	" Henry Crabb Robinson	Feb. 17, '29 (?)
595	165	" Samuel Rogers	March 22, 1829
596	165	" Barton	March 25, 1829

Letter No.	Page			
597	167	To	Miss Sarah James	April, 1829
598	168	"	Henry C. Robinson	April 10, 1829
599	170	"	" " "	April 17, 1829
600	172	"	George Dyer	April 29, 1829
601	173	"	Thomas Hood	May, 1829
602	173	"	Moxon	No date
603	174	"	Walter Wilson	May 28, 1829
604	174	"	Barton	June 3, 1829
605	176	"	William Ayrton	June 10, 1829
606	177	"	Allsop	1829
607	177	"	William Hazlitt, Jr.	June, 1829
608	178	"	Allsop	July 2, 1829
609	178	"	Barton	July 25, 1829
610	182	"	Allsop	Late July, 1829
611	182	"	Moxon	Sept. 22, 1829
612	183	"	James Gillman	Oct. 26, 1829
613	184	"	Vincent Novello	Nov. 10, 1829
614	185	"	Walter Wilson	Nov. 15, 1829
615	188	"	James Gillman	Nov. 29, 1829
616	188	"	" "	Nov. 30, 1829
617	192	"	Barton	Dec. 8, 1829
618	195	"	Basil Montague	No date
619	196	"	James S. Knowles	No date

[In two parts]

620	196	I —	Charles Lamb to W. Wordsworth	Jan. 22, 1830
620	203	II —	Mary Lamb to Miss Wordsworth	
621	205	To	Moxon	Feb. 21, 1830
622	205	"	Barton	Feb. 25, 1830
623	206	"	Mrs. Williams	Feb. 26, 1830
624	207	"	" "	March 1, 1830
625	209	"	Sarah Hazlitt	March 4, 1830
626	210	"	Mrs. Williams	March 5, 1830
627	211	"	James Gillman	March 8, 1830
628	214	"	William Ayrton	March 14, 1830
629	216	"	Mrs. Williams	March 22, 1830
630	218	"	" "	April 2, 1830
631	221	"	" "	April 9, 1830
632	223	"	James Gillman	Early spring, 1830
633	224	"	James Vale Asbury	April, 1830

Letter No.	Page		
634	225	To James Vale Asbury	Undated
635	228	" Mrs. Williams	April 21, 1830
636	230	" Basil Montague	No date
637	230	" Robert Southey	May 10, 1830
638	232	" Moxon	May 12, 1830
639	233	" Vincent Novello	May 14, 1830
640	233	" " "	May 20, 1830
641	234	" William Hone	May 21, 1830
642	234	" " "	May 21, 1830
643	235	" Sarah Hazlitt	May 24, 1830
644	238	" " "	June 3, 1830
645	239	" William Hone	June 17, 1830
646	239	" Barton	June 28, 1830
647	241	" William Hone	July 1, 1830
648	241	" Mrs. Rickman	1830
649	242	" Barton	Aug. 30, 1830
650	243	" Samuel Rogers	Oct. 5, 1830
651	243	" Vincent Novello	Nov. 8, 1830
652	244	" Moxon	Nov. 12, 1830
653	245	" "	December, 1830
654	246	" George Dyer	Dec. 20, 1830
655	249	" Moxon	Christmas, 1830
656	250	" "	Feb. 3, 1831
657	253	" George Dyer	Feb. 22, 1831
658	257	" Henry F. Cary	April 13, 1831
659	258	" Barton	April 30, 1831
660	261	" Henry F. Cary	May 6, 1831
661	263	" Moxon	July 14, 1831
662	265	" "	Early August, '31
663	267	" John Forster	Aug. 4, 1831
664	267	" Moxon	1831
665	267	" "	Aug. 5, 1831
666	268	" "	No date
667	268	" "	Sept. 5, 1831
668	269	" William Hazlitt, Jr.	Sept. 13, 1831
669	270	" Moxon	Oct. 24, 1831
670	273	" "	Dec. 15, 1831
671	274	" J. Hume's Daughters	1832
672	274	" Charles W. Dilke	March 5, 1832
673	276	" Coleridge	April 14, 1832

Letter No.	Page		
674	277	To John Forster	Late April, 1832
675	277	" Moxon [?]	June 1, 1832
676	278	" John Forster	No date
677	279	" Moxon	July 12, 1832
678	279	" Walter Wilson	August, 1832
679	280	" Henry C. Robinson	Early Oct., '32
680	280	" Walter S. Landor	October, 1832
681	282	" Moxon	Late 1832
682	283	" "	Winter, 1832
683	285	" "	December, 1832
684	285	" John Forster	Dec. 23, 1832
685	286	" Louisa Badams	Dec. 31, 1832
686	288	" Moxon	January, 1833
687	289	" "	Jan. 3, 1833
688	289	" John Forster	No date
689	290	" " "	No date
690	290	" Printer of <i>Atbenæum</i>	January, 1833
691	290	" Moxon	Jan. 24, 1833
692	291	" "	Feb. 11, 1833
693	292	" Louisa Badams	Feb. 15, 1833
694	293	" Moxon	February, 1833
695	293	" "	No date
696	294	" T. N. Talfourd	February, 1833
697	295	" Moxon	1833
698	296	" Charles W. Dilke	February, 1833
699	296	" Moxon	Early 1833
700	298	" B. W. Procter	No date
701	299	" William Hone	March 6, 1833
702	299	" Moxon	March 19, 1833
703	300	" "	March 30, 1833
704	301	" "	Spring, 1833
705	302	" John Forster	No date
706	302	" Moxon	No date
707	303	" "	No date. April 10, 1833 [?]
708	303	" Charles W. Dilke	April, 1833
709	304	" Mrs. William Ayrton	April 16, 1833
710	304	" Moxon	April 25, 1833
711	305	" "	April 27, 1833
712	306	" Rev. James Gilman	May 7, 1833
713	307	" John Forster	May, 1833

Letter No.	Page		
714	307	To John Forster	May 12, 1833
715	307	" Miss Rickman	May 23, 1833
716	308	" William Wordsworth	End of May, '33
717	311	" Sarah Hazlitt	May 31, 1833
718	311	" Matilda Betham	June, 1833
719	312	" Miss Mary Betham	June 5, 1833
720	313	" Mrs. Norris	July 10, 1833
721	313	" Edward Moxon	July 14, 1833
722	314	" Mrs. Norris	July 18, 1833
723	314	" Thomas Allsop	July, 1833
724	315	" Mr. Tuff	1833
725	315	" Edward Moxon	July 24, 1833
726	316	" Edward and Emma Moxon	July 31, 1833
727	318	" Louisa Badams	Aug. 20, 1833
728	319	" Miss M. Betham	Aug. 23, 1833
729	320	" N. F. Cary	Sept. 9, 1833
730	321	" Edward Moxon	Sept 26, 1833
731	322	" " "	Oct. 17, 1833
732	324	" " "	Nov. 29, 1833
733	327	" Miss Frances Brown	November, 1833
734	327	" Charles W. Dilke	Middle Decem- ber, 1833
735	328	" Samuel Rogers	Dec. 21, 1833
736	330	" Charles W. Dilke	No date
737	330	" " "	No date
738	331	" " "	No date
739	331	" Thomas Wood	1834
740	332	" Mary Betham	Jan. 24, 1834
741	333	" Edward Moxon	Jan. 28, 1834
742	333	" William Hone	Feb. 7, 1834
743	334	" Miss Fryer	Feb. 14, 1834
744	336	" " "	No date
745	338	" William Wordsworth	Feb. 22, 1834
746	339	" Thomas Manning	May 10, 1834
747	342	" Charles C. Clarke	No date. End of June, 1834
748	343	" John Forster	June 25, 1834
749	343	" J. Fuller Russell	Summer, 1834
750	346	" " "	Summer, 1834
751	346	" Charles W. Dilke	No date [1834?]
752	347	" Rev. James Gillman	Aug. 5, 1834



Letter No.	Page			
753	348	To	J. H. Green	Aug. 26, 1834
754	348	"	H. F. Cary	Sept. 12, 1834
755	349	"	"	October, 1834
756	351	"	"	Oct. 18, 1834
757	352	"	Mrs. Norris	November, 1834
758	353	"	Mr. Childs	December, 1834
759	354	"	Mrs. George Dyer	Dec. 22, 1834
760	355	"	William Ayrton	No date
761	356	"	" "	No date
762	357	"	J. Badams	No date







